

AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
D A N Y O U N G,

A New England Preacher of the Olden Time.

EDITED BY
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P R E F A C E.

It is said that an autobiography is valuable in proportion as it embraces stirring times in the history of a nation. If this be true in relation to the state, it may be affirmed, with equal propriety, that an autobiography which embraces stirring times in the history of the Church must possess an interest of equal value. When we descend to particular Churches, and consider the exciting events connected with their history, we shall find that autobiographies of men who took a prominent part in those events are full of interest to that particular Church with which they were connected. Everything relating to the early history of Methodism in this country possesses a value to the members of that denomination, and as the early period of the Church history was the most exciting, the autobiographies of her pioneers will al-

ways claim precedence, both in point of importance and interest. Such is the autobiography presented to the reader. Dan Young entered upon the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the most exciting times of her history, particularly that part of it which relates to the introduction of Methodism in the New England States.

Dan Young became a Methodist preacher at a time when Puritanism prevailed throughout New England as the established religion, enjoying the prestige of antiquity, position, and influence, and had interwoven itself with all the traditions, prejudices, and habits of the people. He seemed to have been raised up for the special purpose of resisting ecclesiastical tyranny, and through his talented and persevering efforts in the Senate of New Hampshire, he succeeded in obtaining religious liberty, not only for the Methodist, but for all other denominations. The beloved and faithful colleague of Hedding, who bore noble testimony to his personal piety and elevated talents, he showed himself, during the period of his ministry in New England, "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." Skilled in polemical divinity, he proved himself a match for the giant controversialists of that day, and the reader will find, in what we regard as the most

interesting feature of the book, a perfect armory of defense against the attacks of error in its various forms. His reasoning is plain, practical, and logically conclusive on the subjects discussed. There is a spice of shrewdness, united with a tact which in all controversies is of great service, and without which no talent can be successful, pervading all his discussions. Frank, dignified, and sincere, with a perfect geniality of disposition, he never lost his equanimity of temper, never indulged in personalities or harsh words; always self-possessed, he had an advantage over many of less equable temperament and of stronger prejudices. His whole aim seems to have been to find out the truth on all subjects, and submissively bow to her behests alone.

Twenty-five years ago we formed his acquaintance in the West. He was then President of the Franklin Furnace Company, which had its works on the Ohio River. The company had several iron furnaces embraced in the circuit, and as we had been appointed to the ministerial field, we were placed in the relation of pastor. Never in all our itinerant wanderings did we meet with a more cordial welcome. Young and inexperienced, he took us by the hand, and with all the kindness and gentleness of a father, he advised

and encouraged us in the toilsome and difficult work of the ministry. From the time he traveled with the beloved Hedding up to the present, we hesitate not to say, in all his relations with Methodist ministers he has shown himself the generous, faithful, kind-hearted, noble-souled friend and brother. As a preacher, citizen, and public servant, having been for several years a member of the Ohio Legislature, he has contributed to the religious, literary, and material interest of his adopted state.

We may be partial, and our regard for an old friend may lead us to overestimate the value of his autobiography; but we are of the opinion that no work of the kind, having superior worth, has appeared from any denominational press. Nothing will here be found to offend the nicest taste; while its practical lessons of wisdom, and the deep and consistent piety which pervades its pages, will stir and improve the hearts of all who may peruse them.

His address to itinerant ministers is worthy of all attention, and the sentiments there expressed must commend themselves to all engaged in the traveling ranks. Impressed as he was with the importance of the work, and deep and extensive as was his acquaintance with the itinerancy, the itinerant will here find

lessons of practical wisdom which will prove of no small service to him in the great work in which he is engaged. An experience that embraces the East and the West, the North and the South, from one who serves as a connecting link to the past; an experience that goes back to the times of Asbury and Lee, and comes down to the present time, must possess an importance of the greatest value to the ministry of the day. Especially will this prove of service to our younger brethren in the itinerancy, and all who aim at that noblest and best of objects, to save souls and build up and fortify the Church. The days of hardship in the itinerancy to a great extent are passed; but the examples of heroism, as furnished by our pioneer fathers, should ever be before us to stimulate to zeal, energy, and perseverance in the various departments of Church enterprise. We have other fields besides those in our own land to enter and cultivate for Immanuel: fields white unto harvest, and waiting for the laborers; fields challenging toil, and hardship, and heroic bravery; let the noble deeds of our fathers in the ministry urge us to their speedy occupancy.

His address to the local ministry, founded as it is on an experience of many years, is so seasonable, and its

tone and spirit so admirable, that our brethren in the local ranks cannot fail to be greatly benefited by it. A problem which the local brethren, as well as the Church, have found it quite difficult to solve, growing out of the large numbers in the local ranks, and the paucity of fields of labor at the present day, will be found to a great extent explained in this address. The members of the Church will also find admirable lessons in this interesting autobiography, and we commend it most heartily to all. The young men of the present day will find lessons of wisdom from a genial old man, whose vast and varied experience in the ways of world is such that they cannot fail to be interested and profited by his advice. In fine, this autobiography is absolutely refreshing, and among the large number of biographies which have recently been published, we opine it will take first rank, both in interest and value.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

DAN YOUNG.



CHAPTER I.

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I WAS born in the state of New Hampshire, on the Ammonoosuck River, in Grafton County, on the seventh of April, in the year of our Lord 1783; a year memorable as the one in which peace was made between the United States and Great Britain at the close of the Revolutionary war, a period which gave to our country the blessings of independence and a name and standing among the nations of the earth. My father, Jesse Young, was an officer in the Amer-

ican service in the aforesaid war. He was born and raised in Massachusetts. My mother was a native of Connecticut; her maiden name was Ruby Richardson; my ancestors on both sides came from England. My parents, while in their minority, emigrated to New Hampshire, where they were married, and settled in the place of my nativity. An Indian war soon broke out on the frontiers, which gave them great alarm. My father, together with his scattered neighbors, erected a fort, into which they all went with their families for mutual protection. The Indians having learned this, and that they would there meet a very warm reception, did not attack them. My parents raised a large family of healthy and robust children; they were industrious and enterprising, and my father became the wealthiest man in the county in which he lived. Their first-born was a daughter named Sally, their second was a son named James, and I was the third.

As I advanced in life my religious privileges were very small, there being no church, no religious meetings, and no religious persons in the neighborhood. My mother, though not a professor of religion, early taught me its first rudiments; she also taught me that beautiful and simple evening prayer:

“Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep ;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.”

This prayer is adapted to the old as well as the young, and should be solemnly used by all on retiring to rest. I believe I have never omitted it from early life. She also taught me the Lord's Prayer, which I devoutly used evening and morning. At the age of seven or eight years I occasionally prayed without using these forms. I continued in this course up to the age of about fourteen, when my parents sent me to a dancing school, thinking it would be a polite accomplishment. Youthful as I was, I soon found that praying and dancing would not go together, and having no religious guide, and not being sufficiently firm to come out alone in religion, I gave up praying and acquired a strong relish for balls, convivial parties, and in short for all the gay pleasures of youth. I still, however, had a pride of character which made me despise everything low and inglorious. I never had a fight, nor became intoxicated, nor ever used a profane word in my life. The low and vulgar vices I held in utter contempt.

When I was fifteen, those heralds of the everlast-

ing Gospel, the Methodist preachers, penetrated into the part of the country where I lived, and now, while I think of it, my heart burns with love and gratitude to God that he sent those faithful ambassadors to turn the people from their sins to the ways of righteousness.

I was standing in my father's door one day, and saw a robust-looking man riding a horse with another following behind. That person was Jesse Lee, the apostle of Methodism in New England; and being a heavy man, and his rides long, it was necessary that he should have two horses to perform the labor of carrying him. Soon after this he preached in Landaff, an adjoining town. My sister Sallie went to hear him and was much interested in his sermon; she told me that, among other things, when speaking of the sinner being dead in trespasses and sins, he observed that "it is sometimes said that they are as dead as a stone, but he would rather say that they were as dead as an egg. No life could be given to a stone without a miracle, but a certain process will produce life in an egg; so the power of the Gospel, by the grace of God, will produce spiritual life in the sinner."

Lee was one of the most prominent among the

historical characters of New England Methodism. "He was born in Prince George County, Virginia, in the year 1758. His parents were respectable members of the Protestant Episcopal Church. It was his good fortune early to receive, both at school and at home, a strictly Christian education. He mentions in his journal the salutary influence upon his childhood of the catechetical instruction of his teacher. 'In a thousand instances,' he says, 'when I felt an inclination to act or speak amiss, I have been stopped by the recollection of my catechism, some parts of which I did not understand; yet it was good, upon the whole, that I learned it.' This correct early training produced its usual consequences, conformably to the declaration of the wisest of men. 'I do not,' says he, 'recollect that I ever swore in my life, except one night, being in company with some wicked young people, I uttered some kind of oaths, for which I felt ashamed and sorry all the next day; and when alone, I felt that God was displeased with me for my bad conduct. I believe I never did anything in my youth that the people called wicked. I used, however, to indulge bad tempers and use some vain words. One of my mother's relations came to my father's and stayed all night; the topic of conver-

sation was experimental religion. While engaged on this interesting subject, my father observed, "that if a man's sins were forgiven he would know it." That sentence, "if a man's sins were forgiven, he would know it," took hold of my mind, and I pondered it in my heart. The next day, when alone in the field, it kept running across my mind, "if a man's sins are forgiven he will know it." I thought it over and over again, and concluded it must be so, for my father said so, and I believed it. At length I began to reason with myself thus: Are my sins forgiven? I hope so. But do I know it? No! I have no assurance of it. Immediately it was impressed upon my mind with uncommon force, Go and pray. The impression was repeated, and I went off into a large branch, which was surrounded with thick bushes; then I stopped and looked to see if any person was near me, but could see no one; yet I thought some one might pass that way and see me, so I set off to another place where the bushes appeared to be yet thicker; but when I came there I was afraid of being seen; I then went to another place with the same reasoning and the same fears; but at length I ventured to kneel down, and began to pray that the Lord would forgive my sins. My distress of soul at

that time was very great, and never wore off till my sins were forgiven. I would frequently, after that time, get by myself, and with many tears pray God to have mercy upon my poor soul, and forgive my sins. Sometimes, in the open fields, I have fallen on my knees, and prayed and wept till my heart was ready to break. At other times my heart was so hard, that I could not shed a tear. It would occur to my mind, "your day of grace is past, and God will never forgive your sins." It appeared to me that of all sinners in the world I was the greatest. Thus I went on for about four weeks, in which time I never, for an hour, lost sight of my wretched condition. The cry of my soul was, "How shall I escape the misery of hell?" I cared little about the sufferings of this life if I could but escape eternal misery. I read, that some "asked, and received not, because they asked amiss;" the remembrance of this made me, for a season, afraid to use many words in prayer, for fear I should pray improperly, and therefore ask amiss. One morning, being in deep distress, fearing every moment I should drop into hell, and viewing myself as hanging over the pit, I was constrained to cry in earnest for mercy, and the Lord came to my relief, and delivered my soul from the

burden and guilt of sin. My whole frame was in a tremor from head to foot, and my soul enjoyed sweet peace. The pleasure I then felt was indescribable. This happiness lasted about three days, during which time I never spoke to any person about my feelings. I anxiously wished for some one to talk to me on the subject, but no one did. I then began to doubt my conversion, and to fear that I was deceived. I finally concluded that if I were not converted, I would never rest without the blessing, and began to pray to the Lord to show me my lost condition, and let me feel my danger, as I had previously done; but as I could not feel the burden of my sins, the enemy of my soul suggested to my mind that the Lord had forsaken me, and that I had sinned away my convictions, and deceived my own soul. Thus I was a prey to those doubts and perplexities for about six months before I could assuredly believe that I was in the favor of God. One evening, traveling in company with a religious neighbor, he asked me if I were ever converted! I told him I believed I had been. He asked me several questions relative to the circumstances of the change, which I endeavored to answer. He then said, "You are surely converted." I was much strengthened by that conversation, and so

much encouraged as to tell other people, when they asked me, what the Lord had done for my soul.'

"When, in 1774, a Methodist society was formed in the vicinity, young Lee, then but sixteen years of age, together with both his parents and an elder brother, immediately joined it. The doctrine and spirit of the new sect were accordant with their own experience. His father freely opened his house as a regular preaching-place of the circuit, and for nearly half a century it was the home of the laborious itinerant whenever he passed through that section of his field. 'Like the house of Obed-Edom,' says the biographer of Lee, 'the Lord blessed his, because the ark of the Lord rested there. This son often took sweet counsel with the preachers who visited his father's. They not only imparted instruction by the public ministration of the word, but in social conversation they gave such advice as was suited to the particular case of each individual.'"

Lee entered the itinerancy in 1783, and after traveling thirty-three years he closed his labors with his life. As the pioneer of New England Methodism he occupies a prominent place in the history of the Church.

Elijah R. Sabin, a man of deep piety and great

zeal, and John Brodhead, a very eloquent man, whose astonishing power in prayer would seem almost to bring heaven and earth together, with others full of zeal and the Holy Ghost, labored with great success in this part of the country. The following admirable tribute to the memory of Broadhead we take from the "Memorials of Methodism."

"Mr. Brodhead was a true Christian gentleman, courteous, unaffectedly dignified, and yet of a temper so kindly and benign, that all who approached him loved him, and even little children found in him an endearing reciprocation of their tender sympathies; he was universally a favorite among them. His moral character was pre-eminently pure and lovely. He was ever hopeful, confiding in God and in man, forbearing toward the weak, co-working with the strong, instant in prayer, living by faith, entertaining large and apostolical views of the gracious provisions of the Gospel and the gracious purposes of Providence. All felt in his company that they were in the presence of a large-minded, pure-hearted, and an unlimitedly trustworthy man. With such a character he could not but be generally popular, and such was the respect

and esteem entertained for him by his fellow-citizens of New Hampshire, that, besides important offices in their state legislature and executive council, he was sent by them, during a term of four years, as their representative in the Congress of the United States, and his consent alone was necessary to have secured to him the supreme office of the state. While in civil offices he retained unabated the fervency of his spiritual zeal; in Washington he maintained, at his lodgings, a weekly prayer-meeting, which was composed of his fellow legislators; and on Sabbaths he preached, more or less, in all the neighboring Methodist churches.

“As a preacher, he possessed more than ordinary talents; his clear understanding, combined with quick sensibilities and a vivid imagination, could not but render him eloquent on the themes of religion. He was partial to the benigner topics of the Gospel, and often would his congregations and himself melt into tears under the inspiration of his subjects. When he treated on the divine denunciations of sin, it was with a solemnity, and at times with an awful grandeur that overwhelmed his hearers. ‘I heard him,’ says Rev. T. C. Peirce, ‘when I was a young man, preach on the last judgment, in Bromfield-

street chapel, on a Sabbath evening, and if the terrible reality had occurred that night its impression could hardly have been more awfully alarming.' At such times, 'seeing the terror of the Lord,' he persuaded men with a resistless eloquence, his large person and noble countenance seemed to expand with the majesty of his thoughts, and he stood forth before the awe-struck assembly with the authority of an ambassador of Christ.

"Mr. Brodhead's personal appearance was unusually interesting. He was six feet in stature, with an erect and firmly built frame. Though slight in person when young, in his maturer years he became robustly stout, and toward the end of his life somewhat corpulent, but retained to the last the dignified uprightness of his mien. His complexion was light, features well defined, forehead high and expanded, his eye dark, large, and glowing with the spontaneous benevolence of his spirit. In fine, his *tout ensemble* rendered him one of the noblest men in person, as he unquestionably was in character."

There was a great move in the neighborhood; a few of the people were in favor, but the majority were against these men of God. My sister Sallie and brother James became early subjects of divine

grace, and I presume that I should, had it not been for the bad influence which my rage for dancing and other vain amusements had produced. I have been often asked what is the harm of dancing? Well, it is perhaps as pleasant a way to go to perdition as any that can be taken. The fact is, there are but two roads, the right and the left, the right is the strait and narrow way of holiness, and leads to life; the left is the broad road to death and destruction, and all vain amusements lead us in this road. At the age of fifteen an old Universalist talked with me on the subject of his doctrine, and put some books relating thereto into my hands. These books were written with much art and deep sophistry, and I was easily led to believe a doctrine so congenial with my wishes, by which I could live in all the indulgence of worldly pleasures and still be sure of salvation. I read all that I could obtain on this subject. Such as John and James Reiley, Winchester, Huntington, Ballou, and others. I became an adept in the doctrine and had no dread of encountering anybody on the subject, except talented Methodist preachers. It was gratifying to me to get wedged in with the Calvinists. To such I would say, the difference between us is only as the difference between a small and a large circle.

We agree that God has foreordained all things whatsoever that come to pass. We must also agree that God cannot make decrees in opposition to his will. Therefore we must of course do the will of God in all our acts. Now I think that a God who is love will not eternally torment any of his creatures for doing his will. I became a strong opposer of the Methodists. To be sure I did not oppose them with low and vulgar slang, but I affected to pity them; they are, I would say, undoubtedly sincere, but misguided. The work of God, however, went on gloriously among them. The drunken, the profane, and the dissolute were changed to sober, praying, and virtuous members of society. Yet persecution and the vilest reproach everywhere followed them, and gave a practical comment on the declaration that if any will "live godly in Christ Jesus they shall suffer persecution." In some instances parents cruelly whipped their children till the blood ran down to the ground, for no other reason than loving and serving their adorable God and Saviour. In other instances wives, highly worthy and deeply pious, were cruelly turned out of doors in the darkness, cold and storm, by their persecuting husbands, merely for joining the Methodists. A wealthy man, who lived near my father, had

a son and daughter well educated, who became much awakened and desirous of joining the Methodists. But he would not suffer them any more to go to their meetings, and finally succeeded by his wicked course in turning them to folly and vice. The result was, that the son became a wretched sot, and the daughter became an exceedingly vicious woman. Let parents well consider what they may bring their children to by opposing them in religion. At the age of nineteen my father sent me to an academy at Haverhill, in New Hampshire. Here I principally studied rhetoric, mathematics, trigonometry, and astronomy. With this last study in particular I was greatly pleased, and made great proficiency in it. I projected eclipses of the sun and moon with various astronomical calculations. At this place Satan, with the help of Calvinism and Universalism, had succeeded in keeping out the Methodists. My opposition to them was therefore very acceptable. I think it proper here to say that subsequently God gave the Methodists great success, this opposition notwithstanding; and in that place an excellent society was established. When I returned home from my academic studies, I was engaged partly in taking charge of my father's mills, and partly in teaching school.

About this time I had a very singular dream, which, in its results, has probably had a great bearing on the course of my life. If any shall say that it is inconsistent that dreams should have any influence on us, I answer, the Bible is full of testimony to the point that dreams often have a significant import. In my sleep I conceived that I was in a very solitary place, and walking across a very large hall where all appeared safe. I stepped on a trap-door which dropped me into a very deep cellar, which had no other light than what came through the opening left by the trap-door. I wandered about in search of a place to get out, but could find none, and came to the painful conclusion that I should there starve to death. My feelings were as awful as if it had been a reality in my wakeful hours. In this horrible dilemma, to my unspeakable joy, I heard a voice above saying, "Come here and I will help you out." I looked, and saw a man standing on the floor above, yet I could not conceive how he could help me out, the cellar was so deep ; but as I approached under the door he reached down his hand, and his arm became elongated, so that he took me by the shoulder, raised me up, and set me on the floor. I shall never forget the look of pity and benevolence he fixed on me. But

immediately his appearance changed, his garments became as white as light, and his countenance like the sun. He then said to me: "I am Christ, and I have come to help you out of this cellar, and warn you of your danger. This trap-door on which you stepped, where all appeared safe, is to represent to you the doctrine of universal salvation, in which you are trusting; and as it gave way, and dropped you into despair, so if you continue to trust in that doctrine it will lead you to utter ruin." He then instantly vanished from my sight and I awoke. All was very vivid on my mind. I lay awake and pondered, and said to myself, an important doctrine in theology should not be changed on the strength of a dream. O no; but is it not possible that I may be wrong? Can there be any harm in the review of the whole subject? This course I finally determined on, and went into it with all the candor and close thought that I could be master of. I reviewed all the arguments for and against the doctrine of Universalism, and the result was, a clear conviction that although the writers which I had read had reasoned with great ingenuity, yet their arguments involved subtle sophisms, and that any candid and intelligent person who would read the Bible with a disinterested desire

to know what doctrines it contained, would undoubtedly arrive at the conclusion that it clearly contained the doctrine that the righteous shall be forever happy in a future state, and the finely wicked forever miserable. I now determined to count the cost: to consider candidly and deeply this question, Is it best or not, all things considered, to be religious? For some weeks my mind was closely engaged in weighing and digesting this subject. All the crosses, trials, and persecutions which would attend a religious course were closely considered. And, on the other hand, the joys, hopes, and consolations of religion, as far as I could judge of them by the testimony of the Scriptures and the testimony of the pious, were well weighed. The final result was, all things considered, it is beyond all possible doubt best to be religious, even in view of the present life. And then when the thoughts are carried to a future state, the argument in favor of religion is perfectly overwhelming. I then came to a full decision that, by the grace of God, I would serve him. From that moment to this hour I have never hesitated for an instant as to my course. In about four weeks from that time I had the witness that my sins were washed away in the blood of the Lamb.

During this period a circumstance happened calculated to try the strength of my resolution ; I had not disclosed my feelings to any human being. A large ball was appointed at my father's, who kept a public house. I was appointed to manage it ; I told them I should not attend it. This excited much surprise, especially as I refused to give any reason for my course. On the Sabbath preceding the ball I attended a prayer-meeting, where I resolved, by the help of God, to do whatever should appear to be my duty. It soon appeared to me that I ought to tell them of my desire for salvation, and ask them to pray for me. I rose for that purpose and commenced to speak, when, to my great joy, my load of guilt and woe was all removed, and my soul filled with a Saviour's love. It was a very affecting and joyful time. I knew well that reproach and persecution awaited me, for in those times "this sect was everywhere spoken against." But my feelings were more like coveting than dreading persecution. On the evening of that day I took the Bible and went to a sequestered spot on the bank of the romantic and beautiful Ammonoosuc. I opened the sacred book, and read from the sermon of our Saviour, "Blessed are ye when men shall persecute you, and

revile you, and speak all manner of evil of you falsely, for my sake; rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven." I pressed the Bible to my heart, and with gushing tears of joy, exclaimed, "O God, it is enough!" During the following week I wrote a warm letter to my old friends, the ball company, giving them my reasons for not joining them in the ball. It was directed to the managers, with a request that they would read it to all the company.

But this they would not do, for the reason, as I afterward learned by some of them, that they presumed it would break up the ball. The morning after my conversion my mother told me that she hoped I would join the Presbyterians or Baptists, and not the Methodists, as they were so much persecuted. I told her the Presbyterians and Baptists were no doubt good Churches; but as to the Methodists being persecuted, I had set out by the grace of God to save my soul alive, and therefore with me it was no object to shun persecution. I emphatically went on my way rejoicing.

CHAPTER II.

His Brother enters the Ministry—John Brodhead—Joins the Church—Prevailing Religions—Opposition—Called to preach—Remarkable Answer to Prayer—An Incident—The Sinner found out—The Dustins—A thrilling Story—Admitted into the New England Conference—His Colleague—Rules—Interrupted while preaching—Obstacles—Hardships—Challenge to a Discussion—Barre Circuit, Vermont—Elijah Hedding—Criticism—Controversy on Universalism—Sabin and Calvinism—Personification of the Devil—Hedding a Master of English Literature—Perils in crossing Lake Champlain—Van Rensselaer—The Preacher and his Rent—Faithful Preaching.

ABOUT this time, my brother James, who was a very devout and holy man, entered the ministry, and preached with great zeal and success. He had long prayed fervently for my conversion, and now he was overjoyed, and a new stimulus seemed to animate the Church. Brother John Brodhead, of whom I have spoken, soon preached in the neighborhood, and opened the door of the Church. I did not wait to be urged to join ; I gladly pressed my way forward and gave him my hand. To me it is unpleasant to see persons who mean to be religious requiring to be urged into the Church, as if it were a condescension

in them to join the sacramental host of God's elect. I now found myself associated with those who loved each other with a pure heart fervently, instead of being surrounded by those with whom friendship was a cold commerce of interest. The tokens of kindness and affection which I now received from my brethren, and especially the preachers, were to me a great source of delight. I read much in the Bible, and the best religious books which I could obtain, with much delight and profit. My aversion now for the vain amusements which formerly engaged my attention was very strong, and my desire for the salvation of sinners was very fervent.

The glorious work of God was now spreading far and wide through the country by the labors of the Methodist preachers. Calvinism, Universalism, and Deism had been the order of the day, but these crumbled and fell before the glorious testimony of the Gospel, like Dagon before the ark. In vain were they arrayed in their combined force; in vain was the tongue of falsehood and slander put in requisition; sinners were everywhere awakened, mourners converted, believers strengthened, victory perched on the cross, and songs of joy and

triumph echoed through the vales and rose over the mountains.

It was not long after I had tasted that God was gracious, that my mind became impressed with the idea that I should some day have to call sinners to repentance. As this impression became stronger and more constant it gave me uneasiness, and I tried to resist it. But when I so tried my enjoyment left me, and I could have no delight in prayer nor any assurance that God would answer me.

In the winter of the twenty-first year of my age I was teaching school near the town of Lincoln, at the base of the White Mountains. A very deep snow had fallen, and Brother Sabin, a preacher of great zeal and success, having an appointment to preach in Lincoln, sent me word that the snow was so deep he could not get to it, and wished me to go and attend it for him. I accordingly went, with an earnest prayer to God that, if it was my duty to preach the Gospel, he would give some particular manifestation of his presence and grace in the meeting; but if not, that there might be no such display. I went on; the snow was very deep and the mercury below zero. When I arrived, to my astonishment the house was crowded. I was particular to inform the

assembly that I was not a preacher, but wished to make some remarks on a certain passage of Scripture, written by St. John, the Evangelist, being the words of our blessed Saviour, as follows: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." It was a glorious time; many shouted for joy, others deeply mourned, some exhorted with much force. As I closed my discourse one man rose and said: "I came to this place cursing and swearing about the Methodists, but glory to God, he has just spoken peace to my soul." My mind was so impressed with a sense of God's presence and goodness in answer to my prayer, that I could no more doubt as to my duty.

Soon after this I received license as a local preacher, and commenced preaching in the neighborhood where I was born and raised, and formed there a new society, a number of whom I presume are now in Paradise. It was perhaps a singular circumstance that I could always preach with most liberty and success among my particular acquaintance and kinsfolk. About four miles from my father's a man by the name of Merrill lived, whose heart God had touched. He invited me to preach at his house, which I accordingly did, and the various rooms in it

were crowded full. While preaching in warm style, one man, whose life was anything but virtuous, finding that it was getting too warm for him, jumped up and crowded his way out, with indications of uneasiness. As he went a Brother Noyes, a very good man, cried out, "The wicked flee when no man pursueth." At the close of the meeting a man by the name of Peabody, who thought himself of more consequence than his neighbors regarded him, blustered up through the crowd as if he expected to make me retract something which I had said in speaking of a character not very enviable. With a haughty air he said to me, "Sir, did you mean me when you said thus and so?"

My reply was, "I meant you, sir, if it applied to you."

"Well, did you mean me in particular?"

"No more than all the others to whom it was applicable." The crowd began to say, "Why, if the fool had kept still we should not have found him out." He soon left. The most interesting incident of this meeting was the awakening of a young man by the name of Joseph Merrill, son of the man of the house. He often came to me afterward through the woods, and over the hills, a distance of three miles, on foot,

to inquire the way of salvation. He was finally happily converted to God, and became a very eminent preacher of the Gospel. I shall have occasion to refer to him hereafter. I have mentioned the incidents of this meeting as illustrative of early Methodism. The time will come when the preaching in a private house, the crowded rooms, the running out of a man wounded by the sword of the Spirit, the sentiments uttered by Brother Noyes, the awakening of young Merrill, his walking so far through the woods for religious instructions, and finally becoming one of our greatest preachers, I say the time will come when these things will all seem strange and have a deep interest.

About this time there came two modest and plain young preachers in the neighborhood by the name of Dustin; they were devoted and useful, though not as powerful in preaching as some others. There was an incident connected with their pedigree so interesting that I think it proper here to relate it. I am sure it will be acceptable to the reader.

These excellent young men, I understood, were descendants of the famous Mrs. Hannah Dustin, of so much celebrity in the history of Indian warfare in New England. The account of her heroic exploit

among the Indians I believe is but little known, and will, I presume, be very acceptable to the reader, especially as it shows what presence of mind and heroism a woman will exhibit when hard pressed with injury, suffering, and danger. The account of this tragical scene is thus given by Dr. Cotton Mather :

“On the 15th of March, 1697, a band of about twenty Indians came unexpectedly upon Haverhill, in Massachusetts, and as their numbers were small, they made their attack with the swiftness of the whirlwind, and as suddenly disappeared.

“The war, of which this eruption was a part, had continued nearly ten years, and soon afterward came to a close. The house which this party of Indians had singled out as their object of attack, belonged to one Mr. Thomas Dustin, in the outskirts of the town. Mr. Dustin was at work at some distance from his house at the time. Whether he was alarmed for the safety of the family by the shouts of the Indians or other cause we are not informed; but he seems to have arrived there in time enough before the arrival of the Indians to make some arrangements for the preservation of his children. But his wife, who but about a week before had been confined of a child, was unable to rise, to the distraction of her agonized

husband. No time was to be lost. Mr. Dustin had only time to direct the children's flight, (seven in number,) the extremes of whose ages were two and seventeen, and the Indians were upon them. With his gun the distressed father mounted his horse, and rode away in the direction of the children, whom he overtook about forty rods from the house. His first intention was to take up one if possible and escape with it. He had no sooner overtaken them than this resolution was destroyed, for to rescue either to the exclusion of the rest, was worse than death itself to him. He therefore faced about and met the enemy, who had closely pursued him. Each fired upon the other, and it was almost a miracle that none of the little retreating party were hurt. The Indians did not pursue long for fear of raising the neighboring English before they could complete their object. And hence this part of the family escaped to a place of safety.

“We are now to enter fully into the relation of this very tragedy. There was living in the house of Mr. Dustin, as nurse, Mrs. Mary Neff, a widow, whose heroic conduct in sharing the fate of her mistress when escape was in her power, will always be viewed with admiration.

“The Indians were now in the undisturbed possession of the house, and having driven the sick woman from her bed, compelled her to sit quietly in the corner of the fire-place while they completed the pillage of the house. This business being finished, it was set on fire, and Mrs. Dustin, who before considered herself unable to walk, was, at the approach of night, obliged to march into the wilderness and take her bed upon the cold ground. Mrs. Neff attempted to escape with the infant child, but was intercepted, the child taken from her and its brains beat out against an apple-tree, while its nurse was compelled to accompany her new and frightful masters.

“The captives, amounted in all to thirteen, some of whom, as they became unable to travel, were murdered and left exposed upon the way. Although it was near night when they quitted Haverhill, they traveled, as they judged, twelve miles before encamping, and then kept up with their new masters in a long travel of a hundred and fifty miles, more or less, within a few days ensuing. After journeying awhile, according to their custom, the Indians divided their prisoners. Mrs. Dustin, Mrs. Neff, and a boy named Samuel Leonardson, who had been captured

at Worcester about eighteen months before, fell to the lot of an Indian family consisting of twelve persons, two men, three women, and seven children. These, so far as our accounts go, were very kind to their prisoners, but told them there was a ceremony which they could not avoid, and to which they would be subjected when they should arrive at their place of destination, which was to run the gauntlet. The place where this was to be performed was an Indian village, two hundred and fifty miles from Haverhill, according to the reckoning of the Indians. In their meandering course they at length arrived at an island in the mouth of Contookook River, about six miles above Concord, in New Hampshire. Here one of the Indian men resided. It had been determined by the captives, before their arrival, that an effort should be made to free themselves from their wretched captivity; and not only to gain their liberty, but, as we shall presently see, something by way of remuneration from those who held them in bondage. The heroine, Dustin, had resolved, upon the first opportunity that offered any chance of success, to kill her captors and scalp them, and return home with such trophies as would clearly establish her reputation for heroism, as well as insure her a

bounty from the public. She therefore communicated her design to Mrs. Neff and the English boy, who it would seem readily enough agreed to it. To the art of killing and scalping she was a stranger, and that there should be no failure in the business, Mrs. Dustin instructed the boy, who from his long residence with them had become as one of the Indians, to inquire of one of the men how it was done. He did so, and an Indian showed him, without mistrusting the origin of the inquiry. It was now March 23, and in the dead of the night following this bloody tragedy was acted. When the Indians were in the most sound sleep, these three captives arose, and softly arming themselves with the tomahawks of their masters, allotted the number each should kill, and so truly did they direct their blows that but one escaped that they designed to kill. This was a woman whom they badly wounded, and one boy for some reason they did not wish to harm, and accordingly he was allowed to escape unhurt. Mrs. Dustin killed her master, and Leonardson killed the man who had so freely told him, but one day before, where to deal the deadly blow and how to take off the scalp. All was over before the dawn of day, and all things were got ready for leaving this place of

blood. All the boats were scuttled, except one, to prevent being pursued, and with what provisions and arms the Indian camp afforded, they embarked on board the other and slowly and silently took the course of the Merrimac River for their home, where they all soon after arrived without accident.

“The whole country was astonished at the relation of the affair, the truth of which was never for a moment doubted. The ten scalps, and the arms of the Indians, were evidence not to be questioned, and the General Court gave them fifty pounds as a reward, and numerous other gratuities were showered upon them. Colon Nicholas, governor of Maryland, hearing of the transaction, sent them a generous present.

“Eight other houses were attacked besides Dustin’s, the owners of which, in every case, were slain while defending them, and the blood of each stained his own door-sill.”

It may well be presumed that the posterity of such a heroine would be qualified to enter the field of holy warfare, where every kind of opposition might be expected from the infuriated enemies of the cross.

About three months after I was twenty-one years of age I was received into the New England Confer-

ence, and with Brother Willard, my senior preacher, went on New Grantham Circuit. Brother Willard was a good preacher, a very holy man, and kind to me. On entering upon our labors on the circuit, we mutually agreed that we would not go into any house and leave it without praying with the family, if they would suffer us to do so. This was denied me during the year in only two instances. One was a very rough, half savage, wicked man; the other was a priest of what was called the "standing order," though in fact the fallen order. I mention these circumstances to show the state of things in that day. We had that year to endure the toils, privations, sufferings, and persecutions incident to itinerant preachers in those days. At one time, while I was preaching, a company of wretches, who had been taught by their priest that it was the highest of virtues to persecute the Methodists, came round me with many threats. Their leader shook his fist in my face. I then paused and spoke to them in terms of kindness, told them that they could do nothing that would prevent my laboring and praying for their salvation. At this they shrank back, and gave me no more trouble. We had on the whole a good year on the circuit. The work was much enlarged, a goodly

number added to the Church, and Methodism much advanced.

The principal obstacles to the work of God were Calvinism, Universalism, and wickedness of all kinds. Our appointments were generally quite distant from each other. My usual practice was to start as early in the morning as I could, and visit every family on the way to my appointment. My custom was to say to them: "I am a preacher of the Gospel. I have called to make you a religious visit. Will you please to call your family together! I wish to talk to them and pray with you." It was no uncommon occurrence to leave them all weeping. In those rides I sometimes became very hungry, and often had to solicit a piece of bread or drink of milk. It might seem that this would be severe for one who had been raised in the lap of plenty, but I took it all joyfully for the sake of Christ and the salvation of souls. While on this circuit I went to a clerical convention, where I heard many falsehoods about, and much abuse of the Methodists. I believe they did not know who I was. I told them that I was a Methodist preacher, that what I had there heard about the Methodists I knew to be incorrect, and that I would be happy to meet any one whom they might appoint in a public dis

cussion on the doctrines and usages of the Methodist Church. They did not accept the challenge; but while I remained they did not pour out any more abuse upon the Methodists.

The following year (1806) I was sent to Barre Circuit, in Vermont. This to me was a memorable year. I had for my senior preacher that excellent and distinguished man of God, Elijah Hedding. I am sure I never saw a more worthy man. I was intimately acquainted with him for many years, and I know not that I ever saw anything in him that would have been inconsistent in St. Paul. An attachment had existed between us before we met in our work on the circuit, and when we met it very soon matured into warmest friendship and Christian love. He often remarked that our love was like to that of David and Jonathan. At the commencement of our work we entered into a mutual agreement to tell each other of all the errors and improprieties that we knew, saw, or heard of each other. This agreement was faithfully kept, to the advantage of both. We so arranged the circuit as to be often together at our meetings, in which we preached alternately. The one who heard watched and noted all the errors of the one speaking, and gave him a faithful account

of them. This was a great means of improvement. We had not labored long till a gradual but good work of God broke out nearly all round the circuit, which continued throughout the year.

Brother Sabin, of whom I have before spoken, and who was truly a man after God's own heart, was our presiding elder. A celebrated Universalist preacher, by the name of Hosea Ballou, and Brother Sabin, came in contact in a public discussion in Barre meeting house, in which Ballou got badly worsted, and Universalism dropped her wings. Calvinism sometimes attempted to raise a barrier against us, but under the powerful reasoning and overwhelming eloquence of Brother Hedding it would quail and shrink away. Some boasting infidels became happily converted to God. On Onion River we had some lovely seasons. Here, at a quarterly meeting, Brother Sabin preached a sermon on Calvinism, which bore down all before it. In Montpelier, which was on this circuit, a curious event happened. There was a certain young man whose spleen against the Methodists knew no bounds. He was left alone one evening to keep house, while the family went to meeting. A shrewd young man, living near by, took means to have some amusement with this young persecutor of

the Methodists. For this purpose he dressed himself in a suit of fiery red clothes, a clanking chain wrapped around him, a false face, and a cloven foot, to personify the devil. In this plight he went to the house where the young hero of persecution was alone. He entered abruptly. The young bravado, believing the devil had come to take him away, was terribly horrified, and fled to the extreme corner of the room, pursued by the terrific personage, who seized roughly hold of him, crying out with a grum tone of voice, in guttural sounds: "You must go with me!" The young hero, who had been talking so pompously about the Methodists scaring folks into religion, terrified almost out of his senses, exclaimed, "O dear, I wish I was a Methodist!" The representative of his satanic majesty could hold in no longer, and burst into an uproarious laughter. The young persecutor was very glad to find that the time of his taking his journey to the infernal regions would be postponed. After this, when he would begin to vent his spleen against the Methodists, his comrades would silence him very quick by saying: "O Joe, if you thought the devil was after you, you would want to be a Methodist again."

While on this circuit I entered upon the study of

the Latin, and recited to the gentleman who was principal of the academy in Montpelier. Of Brother Hedding, I will just say that he had not the advantages of an early education, and I instructed him some in the English grammar. But he had a strong mind, and a great taste for study, and became quite literary. He particularly became one of the most thorough masters of English literature I ever knew, and was especially a first-rate theologian. He mentioned to me some interesting incidents, which do not appear in his excellently written life. I will therefore state one or two of them here, especially as they illustrate early Methodism, and show what perils preachers would endure to get to their appointments.

Lake Champlain had suddenly frozen over, and two or three inches of damp snow had fallen on the ice. Brother Hedding had an appointment to preach on the opposite side of the lake. It was impossible to ride at a moderate gait, the horse would ball so badly. He would therefore ride at full speed, so that the horse would throw out the balls, occasionally stopping for his horse to rest. Had his horse made one false step, or a ball had remained in the foot for one instant, it would have been fatal. Such were

the perils encountered by the preachers of those days to carry the tidings of salvation to lost sinners.

Another incident which he related was the following: "In the early state of the work which tried men's souls, a gentleman lived in Albany, N. Y., by the name of Van Rensselaer, who owned an extensive tract of land back in the frontier settlement, which was rented out to the early settlers. When the pioneer itinerants were scouring the country to proclaim the glad tidings of great joy, these hitherto neglected settlers found that what the blessed Saviour said, 'The poor have the Gospel preached unto them,' was indeed true, and shouts of redeeming grace were heard in the wilderness and solitary places. Among them was a man of strong intellect, tolerably well informed, and having a heart deeply imbued with divine grace. He soon felt that God had called him to proclaim the word of life, and entered the field of labor, in which capacity his labors were very useful among the rustics of the new settlement. The winter following he took a sleigh load of produce to Van Rensselaer's, to pay in part his rent. His landlord complained that he had not brought enough to pay all. His apology was that the season had been bad for crops. The landlord said roughly :

“‘I am told that you spend much time in preaching, and has not this been the reason that your crops have been short?’

“‘The reply was, that it had in part.

“‘Do you get pay for preaching?’

“‘Not any,’ was the modest reply.

“‘Why then do you preach?’

“‘Because I think it my duty.’

“‘Well, this seems to be a hard case; you think it your duty to preach; you get nothing for it; the crops are neglected, and I don’t get my rent.’

“‘O sir,’ the preacher replied, ‘don’t have any fear about that. If you say so, I will pay you all before I leave the city.’

“‘Well, drop that for the present; will you preach at my house to night?’

“‘Yes, sir, if you please.’

“‘Very well, I will inform the people.’

“‘He had an object in view, and took care who he informed. When the hour came the backwoods preacher saw that the house was filled with the *bon ton* of the city. He looked to God for strength, and determined to do his duty. He took for his text: “The rich man also died and was buried, and in hell lifted up his eyes, being in torment.” With rough

but thrilling eloquence he poured forth all the terrors of the law upon the rich, the fashionable, and the gay. As he closed Van Rensselaer rose and related the conversation he had had with his tenant that day. 'He thinks,' said he, 'that it is his duty to preach and to confess the truth. I think so too; and if it is his duty to preach it is our duty to help him. Let us make a generous collection for his benefit.' This was accordingly done."

Next morning Van Rensselaer presented the rustic but faithful preacher with the collection, together with pay for the produce and a deed of the farm, and told him to go home and preach the Gospel.

At the close of the conference year I parted with Brother Hedding with great reluctance. It is well known that he subsequently became the senior bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and that he filled that important office with great dignity and honor to himself, and usefulness to the Church. His memory will ever be cherished by the Church generally with grateful feelings, and his particular acquaintances will associate with their reminiscences of him all that is pious, amiable, and noble in the human character. He has gone to his great reward, and by the grace of God I expect soon to follow him.

CHAPTER III.

Wonderful Revival — First Mourners' Bench — Trophies of Grace — Protracted Meeting — Singular Exercises — Their Use — Books read — Calvinistic Missionary — Controversy — Wise Determination of a Party on the Way to a Ball — Religious Instruction of Children — Study of Hebrew at Dartmouth — Interesting Conversation with the Professor of Theology — Good Advice — Sisters in Israel — Tribute.

At the conference of 1807 I was assigned alone to my field of labor on Athens Circuit, in Vermont. But before proceeding further I wish to revert back to some earlier events which attended the wonderful revivals which were so gloriously spreading through the country. The first instance of getting up a mourners' bench that I ever saw was in the early state of Methodism, in the town of Landaff, in New Hampshire. It was done by that flaming herald of the Gospel, Brother Sabin. A protracted meeting was held in a grove, where there were great manifestations of the presence and grace of God. There were persons in various parts of the assembly under conviction, as we called it in those days. It was impossible to attend advantageously to them all in this scattered condition, and Brother Sabin adopted the

very excellent expedient of having a bench prepared, and then invited all who were desirous of fleeing the wrath to come and laying hold on eternal life, to come forward and be seated on the bench, which was then without a name. They came forward with a rush. In tones of love and words of grace he directed them to the Lamb of God, reminding them of the great atonement effected by the blessed Saviour, who was then saying unto them, in accents of heavenly love: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Then pointing them to the fountain open for Judah and Jerusalem, and the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin, he reminded the brethren of their obligation and duty to do all in their power by instructing the mourners, and by fervent prayer to God for their conversion. Then were sung those lovely lines:

"Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,
 Weak and wounded, sick and sore,
 Jesus ready stands to save you,
 Full of pity, love, and power;
 He is able,
 He is willing, doubt no more."

Then upon the cold earth, and under the canopy of heaven, the group of weeping and sobbing

mourners, and all the humble pious, solemnly bowed in the presence of God and wondering angels, and offered up several most importunate prayers for the conversion of mourning souls. This labor of love had not continued long till shouts of victory, and joyful acclamations of "Glory! glory! Glory to God in the highest!" began to sound along the mourners' bench, for so we soon learned to call it.

Many were the trophies of Divine grace, and victory seemed perching on every shady tree, and such a joyful meeting had never been in that region before. Hills and fertile valleys were heard re-echoing the songs of redemption and grace throughout that neighborhood. The irreligious part of the assembly did not in those days join in kneeling before the Lord our maker. The Yankees did not then bow the knee of worship till they were converted or deeply awakened. As far as I know, this was the origin of the mourners' bench, which has since become so common in all revivals; and where multitudinous thousands have found the peace which passeth understanding and unutterable joy in the Holy Ghost. The ghastly and terrified appearance of the wicked, the joyful songs of the followers of the Lamb, the deep wail of mourners, and the

loud shouts of those who had just been delivered from the bondage of sin and death, together with the loveliness of the grove, which seemed then, and probably was, the haunt of angels, together, also, with the recollection that God was with us, all conspired to make it one of the most interesting scenes that I ever expect to find this side of heaven.

In the same year a protracted meeting was held in Concord, now New Lisbon, the place of my nativity, where the displays of the awakening, converting, and sanctifying grace of God were very great. All the exhibitions of grace, mercy, peace, and joy, and loud shouts of the newly converted, which attended the happy meeting of Landaff, were here also exhibited, with some additional circumstances, which excited the wonder of all. Here a number of persons fell to the ground and lay for many hours motionless, and, to all appearance, unconscious of what was passing around them; others, while standing erect, instantly became motionless and entirely rigid, and to all appearance a limb or finger could not be bent without breaking it. These exercises were not peculiar to any class, but sometimes happened to those who were deeply pious, sometimes to those who were awakened, and again to those who

appeared to be thoughtless. As far as I have been able to notice these events through my life, those who were thus taken generally came out of them in a state of great joy, proclaiming the praises of God.

At this meeting the opposers of the Methodists sent for a doctor of some celebrity, expecting he would tell them that it was all feigned. He examined them closely, and then, to their mortification, told them that it was not feigned, and that it was no fits, which very much confounded them. Various explanations have been made of these exercises, and I wish to be very modest in expressing my opinion. I will first say, then, that persons are usually very happy while in this state, and come out of it full of religious ecstasy and joy. To me this seems a proof that in some way it is of God, and I can easily conceive why it should be so. The great source of irreligion is thoughtlessness and stupidity. No person can remain unawakened who will think closely on the subject. Now these wonderful exercises have a great tendency to awaken the mind to the vast subject of salvation. Thus the meeting in Concord was followed by a good revival. I have also witnessed that most mysterious of all exercises, the jerks; in this case the person instantly falls, and

every part of the system is thrown into the utmost agitation, more so than can be imagined by those who have never seen them. And it appears as if they could not long live under it. It is not unfrequently the case that those who become alarmed, and attempt to flee, are instantly brought down by it. If I should undertake to account for this, it would be in the same way that I have done for those other mysterious exercises. It has long appeared to me that we ought to be extremely cautious how we oppose anything which reforms the vicious and advances the great interests of morality and religion. As Uzzah was smitten dead for reaching out a rash hand to steady the ark of God, so those who rashly attempt to regulate the work of God by their cold notions of correctness, are always struck dead as far as any spiritual life is concerned.

But to return to my field of labor on Athens Circuit. I went on the circuit with oppressed feelings, as I had no colleague with me. The friends on the circuit were affectionate and kind. My rides were long and the work laborious; but I introduced preaching on some parts of the circuit where my predecessors had not preached. There was quite a spirit of persecution, and the most false and scanda-

lous things were said about me. The members of the Church continued in a very good state of harmony, and on some parts of the circuit a good though not rapid work was carried on. On this circuit I studied Greek, read Stackhouse's History of the Bible, a work of great merit, Locke on the Human Understanding, and other books. I had an excellent presiding elder, namely Brother Brodhead. When riding one day to my appointment, I fell in company with a Calvinistic missionary, who advanced his doctrine of what he called divine decrees. He said that God knew all things because he had decreed them, and that the decrees preceded his knowledge. I told him I knew that was genuine Calvinism, but it was attended with very serious difficulties. A decree was an act, and presupposed the existence of a decreeor. If then God had decreed all things, and the decree preceded his knowledge, there must necessarily have been a period, anterior to the decree, in which God knew nothing.

He said that my argument was very metaphysical.

I replied that Calvinism was a mere mass of metaphysics, and required metaphysics to rebut it.

An interesting circumstance happened on an

adjoining circuit, which I have not seen published, but which is worthy of being published. It is known that Yankees make great calculations on sleigh rides, and have a strong propensity for balls. A party of young persons of both sexes had made their arrangements to take a sleigh ride one evening to a ball. They had proceeded on their way till, coming to a fork of the road, the driver suddenly stopped, and said: "Now which way shall I go? If we take the left road it leads to the ball, and from thence to hell. If we take the right, it leads to a Methodist meeting, and from thence to heaven." As if by a divine impulse, they all exclaimed, "Take the right." They went to the meeting, became awakened, and ultimately all were happily converted, and two of them became very zealous and successful preachers of the Gospel, and labored long among the pioneers of Methodism. While on the circuit I organized schools of children, to instruct them in the ways of religion and truth. I enjoyed myself very much in this work of love. It was the first organization of the kind that I had known. In those days the preachers were usually changed every year on their circuits.

The following year I was sent to Hanover Circuit, New Hampshire; here also I had no colleague. I

was much pleased with the circuit because I had a good many old acquaintances on it, and because, as a general thing, the people were well informed. I had for some time been desirous of studying the Hebrew language, and as Dartmouth College was on this circuit, I should now have the opportunity I desired. I went to the college, called on Mr. Smith, the professor of languages, and engaged him to instruct me in the Hebrew as I came round on my circuit. I purchased of him a Hebrew Grammar, Lexicon, and Bible. He treated me with much politeness, scraped up an old relationship between us, and assured me that he would pay every attention to instruct me. Mr. Shurtleff, the professor of divinity, came in, to whom I was introduced, and after a little pause he said to me that if it would be agreeable he would ask me some questions about the doctrine of the Methodists.

I said, "Please to ask them;" but they looked like Anaks to me. I had before me two giants of Calvinism, not to be surpassed by any in the county, and I a stripling and alone.

He said: "I understand that the Methodists hold to falling from grace."

I replied: "We do not hold to falling from grace, but to persevering in grace. But we do hold that it

is possible for those who have grace so to fall as to perish everlastingly.”

“What then,” said he, “will you do with the promises made to the righteous: such as these, ‘The righteous shall never perish.’ ‘He that has clean hands shall grow stronger and stronger.’”

I told him that we considered those promises made to the righteous as righteous.

“Well,” he said, “I do too.”

“Then,” said I, “if they turn from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they are no longer of that character, therefore the promise no longer refers to them.”

“But,” said he, “what can you do with what our Saviour says: ‘My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.’”

“You will observe,” said I, “that sheep here is a figurative expression referring to the righteous. Now there are three circumstances mentioned by our Saviour as characterizing the sheep, or righteous: First, they hear the voice of Christ; secondly, Christ

knows, that is, approves of them; and thirdly, they follow him. Now when David was in adultery and murder, he did neither of these, therefore was not a sheep, and the promise did not refer to him."

"But," said he, "David repented,"

"That," I replied, "is no proof that he was a sheep when in wickedness; besides, you will not contend that he could not have remained in sin till his death."

I now began to gather courage, and concluded to act on the offensive, and asked him what he would do with such a declaration as this: "When I shall say to the righteous that he shall surely live, nevertheless if he turn from his righteousness and commit iniquities, he shall not surely live, but shall surely die." They said that referred to the self-righteous. I replied that "God never said to the self-righteous that he should surely live; that self-righteousness was sin, and that too of the worst kind, and no promise was ever made to it. Besides, whatever this righteousness was, the crime was in turning from it; but God would never damn a man for turning from sin of any kind. And what can you do with what St. Paul says in the sixth chapter of Hebrews: That it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and been made partakers of the Holy

Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance.”

Mr. Shurtleff said: “It does not say, ‘and have fallen away,’ but ‘if they shall fall away.’”

I replied that I was not a critic of the Greek, my knowledge of it being imperfect; but Mr. Wesley, who was a critic and a scholar, said there was no *if* in the original. He took the Greek Testament out of his pocket, and looked at it a short time and said, “Mr. Wesley is right; there is no *if*.”

“Then,” said I, “the true reading is, ‘and have fallen away;’ what now can you do with it?”

They said they thought a man might do all this and yet not have grace.

I replied: “If a man can be enlightened, taste the heavenly gift, be made a partaker of the Holy Ghost, taste the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and yet not have grace, what becomes of your favorite doctrine of total depravity?” Here they were silent, and I felt that it was pleasant to reason with men with such intelligence. I closed my remarks by saying that I had read our standard writers, and heard many of our preachers on the subject of the possibility of falling from grace, and that

I had never seen or heard anything stronger on the subject than St. Paul gives in the eleventh chapter to the Romans, where he says to the Gentile converts: "Be not high-minded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, [the Jews,] take heed lest he also spare thee not. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell, severity; but toward thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise, thou also shall be cut off."

Here the whole ended, and I left, feeling myself a firm Methodist. I continued my study of the Hebrew, and Mr. Smith was courteous to me. On the circuit I was everywhere received with kindness, and had comfortable quarters. Sometimes I studied in the woods, and had often convenient rooms, and by habit I learned to study well amid the move and noise of the family. I was always fond of children, and took much pains to get them attached to me, that I might the better succeed in giving them religious instruction, and also that the good sisters might not be tortured in their feelings with the fear that I was annoyed with the noise of their children. To me it has always appeared that nothing can be more improper than for a preacher to show signs of uneasiness on account of the little freaks among the children in the

families where they put up. The condition of mothers when they have company is severe enough at the best, and when they discover that the unavoidable noise of their children gives uneasiness to their guest, they are put in a state of mental anguish which can hardly be conceived except by those who suffer it. I have often been much affected with the accounts which pious mothers have given me of the deep anguish they have suffered on such occasions. It is the more inexcusable to occasion these sufferings, because those matrons are such great auxiliaries to our labors in the Gospel. They are truly mothers in Israel. With what unwearied assiduity do they exert themselves to make everything pleasant and agreeable to the preacher who puts up with them. And how could the preachers pursue their labor and toil, and endure their persecutions and suffering, without the benefit of their soothing care. Indeed, it is impossible to conceive how the glorious work of spreading the Gospel could have been carried on, in the early days of Methodism, without the benefit of the labors of these worthy mothers and devoted sisters in Christ. And in the country, at our quarterly and other protracted meetings, where the preachers and brethren put up with their pious friends, our devoted

sisters bestow the most unwearied labor and care, often consuming the midnight lamp to make preparations for their guests. And after all this, when volumes are published to proclaim to the Church and the world the success of the labors of men in the great cause of truth and holiness, there is seldom found any allusion to the worthy deeds of these sisters in Israel; deeds which are worthy to be proclaimed upon the house-top, and to be published in letters of gold, to be seen and read of all men. The names and pious works of many of these benevolent and holy women are now vivid in recollection, and had I the means of doing them justice I would joyfully publish them to the world. But let me say to all those excellent sisters in Christ: Be not weary in well-doing; in due season you shall reap, if you faint not, a glorious reward. He who proclaimed in the great day of judgment, he will recount to the righteous their works of charity and piety, and introduce them into the kingdom of his father, will not forget your labor of love.

CHAPTER IV

Annihilation of the Wicked—Dr. Martin Ruter—The Jewish Rabbi—Texas—The Infidel Club—Judge Johnson—A stiff Question—The Club broken up—Calvinistic Dogmas—Controversy with a Calvinistic Divine—Debate on the Question of Universal Salvation—A Shaker Village—The chief Ruler—Shaker Doctrines—A delightful Exercise—Self-sacrifice of Methodist Preachers.

AT our meetings on this circuit I usually had good assemblies and excellent attention. There was one circumstance which gave us some trouble for a while, but it was soon over. A man by the name of Elias Smith, who had some talent, a good deal of sail, and but little ballast, and who was frequent and sanguine in his changes on religious subjects, pretended to have made a great discovery; which was, that the wicked would be annihilated, and have no future existence. A few unstable members of our Church fell in with this absurdity, but in general they soon returned to us; a small number who did not, went to ruin.

While on this circuit I became acquainted with Martin Ruter, who was one of the first-fruits of

Methodism in Vermont, and the earliest Methodist preacher converted in that part of the country. He commenced preaching at the early age of sixteen, and his labors excited the attention of the public. He was very studious, and his ministry continued to meet the high expectations which his early efforts had produced. He traveled and preached for a while with senior preachers. He was stationed one year in early life in Montreal; while here he studied the Hebrew language under the tuition of a Jewish rabbi. On one occasion he quoted the prophecy of Jacob to this rabbi—that the scepter should not depart from Judah nor the lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come. The rabbi would not attempt any explanation of that remarkable prediction, but fell into a rage.

Ruter was pious, reserved, dignified, learned, and eloquent. Wherever he went he drew large assemblies and excited much admiration. In erudition he was greatly distinguished; he was profound in mathematics, history, and theology; a very distinguished linguist, and read the Scriptures in nine different languages; he published some periodicals which displayed much taste and research; published a history of the martyrs and an ecclesiastical history, which were

works of much merit. He published also an excellent Hebrew grammar and some good school-books. He was principal of a flourishing academy, and was for some years engaged in the book agency at Cincinnati. He was subsequently president of Augusta College, Ky., and afterward of Allegheny College, at Meadville. He was sent by the conference to Texas as a missionary; here his labor was extensive and arduous; he laid off a large portion of Texas in districts and circuits, and succeeded in getting quite a number of preachers on them, whose labors were crowned with abundant success. He adopted measures for the establishment of a college, which in time went into successful operation. When we consider the literary, moral, and religious tone of influence which his talents, piety, and zeal gave to that new, flourishing, and rapidly populating country, no estimate can be made of his invaluable works of faith and labor of love; but, alas! although he had a strong physical frame and robust constitution, his labors were too severe for his strength, and he gloriously fell at his post on the field of battle, full of the triumphant hope of immortality. I have said the more in reference to this great, good, and distinguished man of God, because for some strange reason his history has been

much neglected ; and although one of the most thorough, successful, and worthy theologians of the New World, yet the memory of his worthy deeds seems likely to be in a great measure lost.

Since writing the above an admirable sketch of the life and labors of this eminent man has appeared in the "Sketches of Southern Methodist Preachers."

During the year that I was on this circuit my efforts were mostly directed to the object of keeping the societies in a quiet, peaceful, and flourishing state, in which I hope, by the grace of God, I measurably succeeded. Within the bounds of this circuit an incident occurred so creditable to Christianity that I wish here to snatch it from oblivion. A certain Judge Johnson, a man of superior talents, informed me that some time prior to my arrival there lived in the neighborhood and country around a large number of men of infidel sentiments. These formed themselves into a club, the object of which was to disseminate infidelity. They had their periodical meetings, in which some prominent member of the club delivered an address expatiating on the old superstitions of Christianity, the contradictions of the Bible, the bright light which deism was pouring into the world, etc. The judge said that one day after

returning home from one of these brilliant displays of light and truth, as he had considered it, a stiff question presented itself to his mind. Are we doing any good by our club? Are we making anybody better or happier? He said he could not resist the conviction that these questions must be answered in the negative. Then another question pressed him: Why then continue these efforts, which cost both time and money? "The result was," said he, "that I determined to propose these questions to the club at our next meeting, which I accordingly did. They attempted to hoot them out, and raised the cry, 'O we must put the pontifical robe on Brother Johnson, he has got to preaching.' I replied: 'Gentlemen, I am not to be put down in this way. We called ourselves the men of reason, and I am not to be satisfied with mere hooting and slang. If you can give reasonable answers to these questions I shall be glad; if not, I shall go no more with you.' They did not and could not," continued he, "and the result was the club never met again." The judge said that he then determined to consider in the spirit of candor this question: Is the Bible true? and this investigation resulted in the full conviction of its truth. I will here remark, that beyond all doubt the same result

will follow the same course with all discriminating minds.

The allusions which I occasionally make to Calvinism may perhaps to some appear too severe; but the fact is that the dogmas of this sect formed, particularly at that time, the great obstacle to the work of God. Mr. Wesley has very justly said, "If Calvinism is true, the elect will be saved do what they will, and the reprobates will be damned do all they can." And this irresistible consequence of that gloomy doctrine was everywhere brought up, by persons who had been raised under its influence, as the reason for neglecting the great salvation. We were much in the habit of exhorting sinners, wherever we found them, to flee from the wrath to come; but they, having been trained to believe that God had fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass, had a ready shield to protect them from the force of truth in the doctrine. "If I am to be saved I shall be saved, and if I am to be lost I must be lost." And here all effort for their benefit was at an end, unless we could take the time and could succeed in the work of love, in convincing them that the doctrine on which they based their reasoning was false; and as this doctrine had been insinuated into their minds from early child-

hood, it was almost as difficult to convince them of its being erroneous as it would be to convince a Catholic that the priest cannot forgive his sins. I preached one Sabbath on this circuit when a Calvinistic preacher was present. At the close of the services he seemed inclined to get into an argument, and I was not much inclined to avoid it; so we soon found ourselves engaged in a debate, and the people eagerly waiting the result, which I determined to hasten with as few preliminaries as possible. I said to him: "According to Calvinism, is it possible for any of the reprobates to be saved?"

"Yes," said he, "they can all be saved."

"How is that?" said I, "has not God from eternity decreed that they shall be damned? will he grant them any grace or help to obtain salvation?"

He replied, "No, he will not; but that makes no odds; they can all get religion and go to heaven without the grace or help of God." There was a general burst of indignation that a professed minister of the Gospel should utter such shocking sentiments, and I thought it unnecessary to press him any farther.

There was a small town called Lebanon on my circuit, in which lived an old Universalist preacher, who challenged me to meet him in a public debate on the

doctrine of Universal Salvation. I accepted the challenge, and we fixed on the time in the town of Lebanon. He was to open in a speech of half an hour, and I was to follow, each having a half hour as long as we might choose to continue. Our friends knowing that I was but a youth, and he an old champion, had fears for the result. But neither he nor they knew the fact that I had been a Universalist for five years, and had closely read all their writers. We met; the day was pleasant, the assembly large; we both felt that our respect for order and decorum made it unnecessary to have a moderator, and the result proved it to be so. He commenced, and in his first half hour brought forward the strongest arguments, insisting much that the love of God was a sure guarantee that all mankind would be saved.

He paused a few moments to exult over his unanswerable arguments, as he called them, and to enjoy his triumph. He had used no arguments that I was not perfectly familiar with, and I occupied my half hour mostly in answering his arguments. On the subject of God's love, on which he had placed so much reliance, I remarked that it was impossible for us to have conceptions too strong of the greatness or extent of God's love, but it was easy to draw false in-

ferences from it ; for instance, if a man were to stand upon a precipice, and reason thus : “ God is very good ; his love is great to me, and he is not willing that I should perish ; relying therefore on his love to save me, I will cast myself down from this precipice,” and suiting the action to the logic leap off, he would find to his cost that, although his premises were right, his inference was wrong. So if the sinner will obstinately, against all remonstrances, continue in his sins and rush upon destruction, he will find to his cost that the wages of sin is death, the love of God notwithstanding. God’s love to the antediluvians did not prevent him from destroying them ; nor did his love for the Sodomites prevent him from sending upon them a storm of fire and brimstone. Nor will his love of incorrigible sinners prevent him from taking vengeance on them that know him not, and obey not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and punishing them with an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power. The fact is, that God has made us free agents, and will deal with us as such, and every one shall receive according as his work shall be.

In his next half hour my opponent’s tone of triumph was much lowered. He found an argument, how-

ever, on which he placed great reliance. "St. Paul," said he, "directs us to pray for all men, and I have often been surprised to hear Limitarians pray for the salvation of all men. The same apostle informs us that whatever is not of faith is sin; their prayers, therefore, made in this way in direct opposition to their faith, must be sinful. I shall be glad to hear what my friend, who is so ingenious in waving the force of argument, can say on this subject."

I then resumed my half hour, and first disposed of his other arguments, which were principally based upon certain passages of Scripture, on which an erroneous construction was placed. I then met his main argument on prayer, and first said: "Thus I pray for the salvation of all men; I pray for it fervently, and in full faith that God will hear and answer my prayer." By this time there was some staring, and my opponent gave an arch look of triumph. "I will illustrate my position. Suppose that any one of you were traveling on a bleak morning of November, and should overtake on your way a group of persons suffering much from hunger and cold. You pity them, but have no means of relieving them; but your solicitude for them is in some measure relieved as you look ahead and see a splendid mansion indicating

plenty. You put spurs to your horse, and speedily pass on to the house, and in plaintive tones you represent to the owner the distressed condition of the suffering group you have just passed, and entreat him to relieve them. He tells you in tones of kindness that he will, and accordingly takes every measure to have food and raiment prepared for them, and as they approach, he sends out servants to invite them in to receive the benefit of his bounty. The servants return and inform him that they will not come. Anxious to relieve them, he sends out other servants, to be more importunate, and say to them, 'All things are ready, come and be fed and clothed : ' but still they will not come ; and they pass on and perish of hunger and cold. Query, Did not the man of the house hear and answer your prayer for the relief of those poor wretches to all intents and purposes ? So I have the strongest faith that God will hear and answer my prayer for the salvation of all men, and when he says to me, ' Now what could I have done more that I have not done ? ' I am obliged to bow with deep submission, and feel that my prayer has been fully answered, notwithstanding many will not come."

He took the floor ; and felt so much the force of my reasoning that he did not attempt to reply to it.

He then resumed his argument for the salvation of all men, but in a subdued tone. He had used his strongest arguments, and they had been answered ; it was of no use to return to them. There were, however, two more within his reach, which he grasped with avidity. "If," said he, "the doctrines of Limitarians be true, how awful is the condition of man, that the great majority of them must suffer inconceivable torments in a lake of fire and brimstone to all eternity, where

‘Doomed to be wrapped in sheets of liquid fire,
And tossed on billows of Jehovah’s ire,
While agonizing groans ascend on high,
Loud lamentations reach the distant sky,
Where saints and angels in their blest abode
Chant loud halleluiahs to their God.’

And when they shall have then suffered the extremes of torment as many millions of ages as there are sands on the sea-shore and drops of water in the ocean, it will only be the beginning of anguish ; and must we yield to the mournful prospect that such will be the awful condition of man?" But he was very glad to be able to inform them, from the authority of God’s own word, that no such gloomy prospect was before them. For the sure word of prophecy informs us that the period shall come when God shall wipe

away all tears, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. "Now," continued he, "the doctrine of the Universalists is, that the time or period will come when there will be no more suffering, such as tears, weeping, death, and pain; and behold, a great voice from heaven announces this important fact. If then this voice announces the truth, our heart-cheering doctrine cannot be false, nor can all the art of false reasoning ever shake it. I shall wait to hear whether the gentleman will deny the great truth announced by this heavenly voice, or whether he will take the responsibility of disputing it."

I replied, that "in relation to what the gentleman had said about the awful condition of man upon what he calls the Limitarian scheme, let us look upon the facts as they are. God has made us reasonable and accountable beings, with power, in the exercise of free-agency, to be happy or wretched as we please. Christ has died to atone for our sins. The Holy Spirit has come to lead us in the way of life. Life and death are set before us, and we are solemnly admonished to choose life, that we may live, and whosoever will call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Now then we may all have eternal life on

conditions as gracious and easy as we could desire, if it were left to us. That is, we can have it by asking God for it. And who can desire more? The awfulness of the punishment referred to by the gentleman in such graphic terms, is no objection to the doctrine of the Scriptures, that God will give unto every man according as his work shall be. And if incorrigible sinners will resist all the efforts of mercy and grace to save them, and choose death rather than life, have they any reason to complain? Let then the awful sufferings of the wicked, as represented by the startling language of the gentleman, deter them from plunging into that place of torments. In relation to the glorious truth announced by a voice from heaven, I wish to say that the gentleman's argument all depends on a grammatical criticism. This great voice says, '*there* shall be no more death,' etc. Now if the adverb *there*, is an adverb of *time*, then the gentleman is right, and his doctrine stands on an immovable base; but if that adverb is one of *place*, it does not afford the least countenance to the doctrine of universal salvation. It is perfectly clear that it is an adverb of place and not of time. In the commencement of the chapter the revelator says, 'I saw a new heaven and a new earth;' here it would be a

natural inquiry, *Will there* be death, weeping, and pain? The statement that *there* will be none of them is given as an answer to this natural inquiry. Besides, it is entirely clear from what follows that this *must* be the true meaning. For, going on with the description of events, he soon says: ‘But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and whoremongers, sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.’ Instead then of this passage of Scripture, on which the gentleman has placed so much reliance, and upon which he avowed his willingness to put the whole question at issue, affording any support to his doctrine, it, in fact, when taken in connection with the context, presents an unanswerable argument against it, and an awful view of the future state of the impenitent.”

The champion of Universalism then took the floor for his last half hour. This was the most feeble effort that he made, and no argument was advanced which required answering. When I took the floor for my last half hour the ground was clear, and I took up the time in the selection of the strongest arguments that I could, to disprove a doctrine which I considered false and dangerous.

The space allotted for this I have already exceeded, and cannot give the arguments which I used. As I drew near the close I observed, that all who have any acquaintance with ecclesiastical history know well that when our Saviour came upon earth the Jews generally believed the doctrine of future rewards and punishments. And it is impossible that his discourses would be calculated to confirm them in that belief if that belief was wrong; it would not comport with the duty of a divine teacher. I entreat those who believe in Universalism to pause and consider well that, to say the least, they might be wrong. Indeed, it seems to me that they must see that the force of the argument is all against that system. They ought therefore, at all events, to make their calling and election sure by repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ. In the course of the debate I made some references to the original, in which I felt the more bound, as he had no knowledge of it. "In a review of all that has been said," I finally remarked, "let it be recollected that the gentleman has utterly failed to establish any one position which he has made; and that all the arguments taken from the Scriptures in this debate do, in the most vivid light, clearly establish the im-

portant doctrine, with which we should all be deeply impressed, that God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world, and render to every man according to his works : to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, have sought for glory, honor, and immortality—eternal life ; but to them who are contentious, and would not obey the truth, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish to every soul of man, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.”

I will just say that my opponent was much of a gentleman, and that there was not an unkind word spoken, and I presume not a wry feeling during the debate. He politely invited me to go and put up with him, which I did. Our friends considered the triumph perfect ; but some of the Universalists said, if I had not had the advantage of him in learning, I should not have beaten him in the argument. I am sure the debate was productive of good.

On the limits of the circuit was a large village of Shakers, as they are called. I visited them, and found their principal leader, and had a long conversation with him. Their religion consists principally in living in a state of celibacy ; very formal and frequent dancing to a kind of lurry of a tune sung in a mournful tone ; and a certain set of words, as thee and thou,

very ungrammatically used, as, Does thee know? and a most servile submission to their chief ruler. I questioned him, for the purpose of getting all the information I could in relation to their religion, forms, and ceremonies. From all I could learn, I believe the following to be a correct statement:

As to the Bible, they say it was once true and good, and a proper rule of faith; but it has become abrogated, and no more of any validity, as it has been superseded by their dispensation, which is now the only one of any validity. They worship Ann Lee as a female God. There is, say they, in all the works of nature a male and female, and this principle exists in the Godhead, and that Ann Lee is the female. They know nothing about the new birth, the doctrine of atonement, the love of God being shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, or the witness of the Spirit. I told him that they had no part or lot with genuine Christianity; that they were in a fatal delusion, and in the road to death. While I was speaking one of their young men came in and listened with great attention, but the ruler soon ordered him out. I felt that I had done my duty, and went on my way rejoicing, and soon found myself pleasantly situated in preaching to a good warm society of Methodists,

whose feelings were up to a shouting point, as I showed them that they were well able to go up and possess the goodly land, and led them to Pisgah's top, where we paused and took a delightful view of the verdant fields and never-fading flowers of Canaan; and the river of the water of life issuing from the throne of God and the Lamb; and the tree of life growing in the river, and on either side thereof, richly laden with heavenly fruit, the delicious flavor of which is enjoyed with so much ecstasy by the inhabitants of heaven, among whom we could number many of our dear friends and beloved brethren, with whom we once so joyfully joined in the worship of our God and Saviour, and with whom we shall again unite in the same delightful exercise, but in a higher, happier, and more holy state.

I was then enabled to make in my mind a vivid comparison between the pure and holy religion of the blessed Jesus, and a false and dead theory which has in it no Holy Spirit, no Redeemer, no witness of the Spirit, and no delight or sacred joy.

The work of God under the labors of the self-sacrificing Methodist preachers was going on with various success through the country, and the great object of saving souls, and spreading Scripture holiness through

the land, fired them with a zeal which made them surmount all the difficulties and severe labors, poverty and persecution to which they were exposed. When I reflect upon it, I am filled with surprise that a set of men could be found who would endure all these things not only with patience but triumphant joy.

CHAPTER V

Conference at New London — Bishop Asbury — Lynn — Pastoral Labor — Mode of Operation — Old Seat of New England Methodism — Pioneer Apostle — First New England Conference — Motto — Boston — Excursions in the Country — Discourse to Young People — Aaron Lummus — Zion's Herald — Lindsey — Marriage — Location — Methodist Itinerants — Local Preachers — Lorenzo Dow — Personal Appearance — Anecdote of Dow — Garrettson — Bishops M'Kendree and George — Description of Lynn — Nahant — Salem — An Incident — Reflections.

At the close of this year I went to conference, which held its session in New London, Connecticut. The business of the conference was transacted as usual in great harmony. Bishop Asbury, the apostle of American Methodism, presided with dignity and courtesy. A warm religious feeling was produced in the place by the various animated religious exercises, and the occasion was one of great interest to that place. My brother James and myself, together with others, were ordained elders at this conference.

I was appointed to labor the ensuing year at Lynn, the old cradle of Methodism. Here was a good

society and a convenient house of worship. I immediately laid off the town for my pastoral work into five posts, allotting each post for a day of pastoral labor, reserving Saturday as a day of study. My practice was to commence on Monday morning as soon as I had taken breakfast, make my first call at the first house, say to them, "I am the preacher sent to this charge; I have called to make you a religious visit; will you please to call your family together; I wish to talk with them, and to pray with and for you." While in this station they never refused to comply with my request, but were polite and kind, receiving me as a minister of the Lord Jesus. In a talk of six or eight minutes I would endeavor to impress their minds with a sense of the great importance of salvation, and the necessity of making it the object of life; then pray with them, during which a very serious state of feeling would be produced, and often much weeping. It was usual for them to urge me to stay longer, to which my reply was, "I must not be idle in my Master's work." In this way I would go through the part allotted for the day, and thus in five days I was enabled to go through my entire charge. I left no house unvisited in my way, but took them of all sects and no sect, doubling

my diligence when I had a special visit to make to the sick, a funeral sermon to preach, or other services to attend. This course soon very much increased our assemblies and the interest of our meetings. On Saturday I made preparations for the Sabbath. By these means the rich and the poor shared alike in my care and labors.

Lynn was the old seat of New England Methodism. In this section of country Jesse Lee was the pioneer apostle of our Church; he had preached the glorious doctrine of free grace, free will, and free salvation to the intelligent and amiable people of this place. Here, in 1792, the year memorable in the history of Methodism, the venerable Bishop Asbury, with eight other preachers, (the same number that were saved in the ark,) held the first New England Conference, the membership of the same then numbering one hundred and sixty-eight. If the venerable man of God who presided over that small number of heralds of the Gospel could now review the work, he might well exclaim, in the lines of the ever memorable Wesley,

“ With my pastoral crook
I went over the brook,
And lo! I am spread into bands.”

It will perhaps be thought by some that I had no time to study. My motto was that of Wesley: "Learning is good, saving souls is better;" but still, by availing myself of the morning and evening, two or three hours of each day could be secured for study. Besides all this, a minister of the Gospel will get the most useful knowledge for the work of an evangelist that can in any way be obtained, by visiting the people and learning their peculiar condition, their trials, their fears, their wants, etc. While at Lynn, by exchanging, I preached occasionally in Boston. Our brethren in that metropolis, that great commercial depot and Athens of New England literature, were then, and from what I can learn still remain, humble, pious, and faithful.

While at Lynn I made some excursions in the country, where Methodists had never been, and laid the foundation for the establishment of Methodism in several places. At Lynn I announced that at a certain time I would give a discourse to the young people. A young man by the name of Aaron Lummus, who resided in Salem, eight miles from Lynn, came to hear me; he was deeply awakened, and often came to see me and be instructed in the way of salvation, and was happily brought into the glorious

liberty of the sons of God. He had a good English education, excellent native talents, and deep piety ; he soon entered into the work of the ministry, in which he was zealous and successful. He became the editor of a paper published in Boston under the patronage of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by the name and style of Zion's Herald. This paper has been ably conducted, and extensively circulated, and very useful in the cause of Zion. There was also a young man living in Lynn by the name of Lindsey, who was deeply pious, athletic, and vigorous, and possessed of a strong intellect. I first got him to exhorting, then into the ministry. He finally became a first-rate presiding elder.

In November of this year I was married to a young lady of Northfield, New Hampshire. She was of a good family, well educated, of superior talents, and very pious. She made an excellent wife and mother. By her I had six sons and seven daughters, of whom three sons and four daughters are now living. At the close of this year I located. It was occasioned on this wise: My father before his death had become security, and left his estate encumbered with a large liability, and my mother was in much want of my assistance in settling the business. I intended to rejoin the itiner-

ancy, but could never see my way open to do it. While I was in the work, although I was single, my expenses were about two hundred dollars more than I received. It is very important for the success of the work that the members of the Church should use more effort for the support of their preachers. I felt great reluctance in leaving the itinerancy, my long and intimate acquaintance with the preachers has resulted in the full conviction that the Methodist itinerants are the most pure, disinterested, and devoted set of men in the world, and to me it is a great source of consolation that I shall soon join those worthy men of God, with whom I have labored and fought hand to hand and shoulder to shoulder, on the high fields of glory.

In this connection I may be allowed to speak of the local ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which to my mind presents an interesting spectacle. Where else can we look for such a numerous body of men making such sacrifices for the public good, and the prosperity of the Church? They have to meet their expenses for books, clothing, keeping or hiring a horse, their time and labor in preaching, and in general receive no pecuniary compensation; and when they receive anything it is very small in

proportion to their work. But the consolation is that God will reward them for their labors of love.

While at Lynn the eccentric Lorenzo Dow put up with me several days; his appearance was grotesque, his beard long and patriarchal, and he attracted the attention of all persons, who crowded to see the wonderful preacher. His clothes were exceedingly coarse and rough. He preached several times and with good effect. He was not learned, but very intelligent. By extensive traveling, much preaching, and close observation, he had acquired a fund of knowledge which made him extremely interesting in conversation, and his deep piety was very edifying. I considered it a happy circumstance that I had an opportunity of forming an intimate personal acquaintance with one whose extensive labors and great singularity had excited so much public attention. I presume a particular description of his person would be acceptable to the reader, as such has never yet been given. In height he was nearly six feet, his form rather fragile, his limbs small, and his body slender; yet he appeared healthful, and as having a constitution for endurance; rather quick and active in his motions; his complexion was light, with intelligent blue eyes,

light brown hair. He had a strong mind and quick apprehension; with strangers he was cautious and reserved, but with friends he was quite affable, frank, and communicative, and when his reserve was thrown off it was a great treat to be in his company, as his conversation was quite interesting and edifying. I will here relate an anecdote of him, which will give some idea of his appearance and disposition. Jesse Lee made an appointment a year beforehand for Dow to preach at Lynn, and told Brother Johnson, a wealthy and distinguished member of our Church, that he should send Brother Dow to put up with him. When the day of his appointment had arrived, Brother Johnson was looking down the street for him, and saw him coming up, and waited at his door till he came opposite, and beckoned with his hand, and called out, "Halloo, Brother Dow, stop here!" and stepping quickly to him, gave him his hand very cordially and said, "Brother Dow, I am very glad to see you; get off and come in."

. "You have the advantage of me," said Dow; "I have no recollection that I ever saw you before."

"O no, you never did, nor I you."

"How, then, did you know me?"

"Why, Brother Lee told me that when I should

see the ugliest-looking man come along that I had ever seen in my whole life I might know it was you, and the moment I saw you coming up the street I knew it must be you."

"Well, well," said Dow, with a pleasant laugh, "upon that I think I will put up with you;" and he dismounted and went in.

It was particularly interesting to converse with him about his travels and labors in Europe. The eccentricities of this singular man somehow always took well with the public; but all who have attempted to imitate him have made an utter failure.

I had also for a guest Freeborn Garrettson, a man much known and distinguished in the early days of Methodism. I heard him preach, and his discourse was plain, unassuming, and forcible. Bishops M'Kendree and George honored me with a visit for a few days, and preached in the place. Their preaching was plain, powerful, and zealous, indicative of great unction and entire devotion to God and the Church. Such indeed has been the preaching of all our bishops whom I have heard.

Before taking my leave of Lynn, I will say a few words of it as a location. It is on many accounts a very desirable place as a residence; it lies upon the

sea-shore, situated near Nahant and Swampscott, two very romantic and beautiful watering places. It is eight miles from Boston, and in view of that splendid city. On the other side is Salem, eight miles distant from it, a handsome commercial city; and within a few miles, in an easterly direction, is Marblehead, a very romantic place, washed by all the surges of the ocean waves, and famous for its fisheries. The inhabitants are distinguished for their energy and daring courage. Lynn is a very healthy situation, and the people much in a state of equality. Morality, industry, and affability are their distinguishing characteristics. The place is famous as the old seat of Methodism, and, as might be expected from this circumstance, there is very little drunkenness or profanity, and much deep piety and kindness.

On the eighth of June I started from Lynn with my amiable wife for the place of my nativity on the romantic Ammonoosuck river, in New Hampshire. An incident may be worth stating here, as it shows the state of the seasons in that country. When I started from Lynn the apple-trees were in full bloom, and as I moved on rather leisurely to the north, about one hundred and fifty miles, on arriving at

Ammonoosuck, about the middle of June, they were just in bloom there. Here a train of reflection rushed on my mind. I had spent five years in the itinerancy. Before I started in the work I refused an offer of five hundred dollars a year, but in going into the ministry I had spent five years of the prime of my life. I had endured great fatigue, sometimes beating my way, and leading my horse through deep snow, and the mercury below zero, and flakes of the hard crust of the snow hurled in my face by the howling wind so as to cut the skin and bring out the blood over my face; at times so pressed with hunger that I would call on strangers and beg a piece of coarse bread, and then when I would think of the bountiful table and the five hundred dollars a year which I was pressed to accept, the flesh would complain; but then again, when I would think how glorious it was to be in the service of my divine Master in the great work of saving souls, my mind would rise above all desponding feelings, and I would glory in tribulations. I have endured threats of personal violence, the vilest of persecutions, the most scandalous falsehoods had been circulated about me, and, in short, every species of opposition which the wicked could bring upon me; but on a review of the whole I rejoiced, and will

rejoice, that it was in my power thus to serve God and the Church. It was a portion of my life which I have always remembered with great pleasure and satisfaction, and trust that I shall do it to all eternity.

CHAPTER VI.

Early Methodism in New England—Grave Charges—Opprobrious Epithets—Two great Political Parties—A Piece of Gossip—An Incident—Love-feasts—The Irishman and the Rowdy—Disturbance of Religious Meetings—Casting out a Devil—Persecutions—A Congregational Minister—Anecdote of Jesse Lee—A Cambridge Student outwitted—Great Effects from little Causes—A pious old Lady—A supernatural Voice—Query—Local Preacher—Deistical Club—An Incident.

It was my original design to have said less of myself and more of the Church. I think now that I can get at that object by writing a chapter of incidents of early Methodism in New England. In the early days of Methodism here it was literally true, both of the preachers and people, that all manner of evil was spoken of them falsely. Being myself exposed to this slang for several years, I was in a condition to know more about the calumny and reproach which was heaped upon them than otherwise I should have been. It was seriously said that the preachers were emissaries of the French government; that France designed to subjugate this country whenever the Methodists should become

sufficiently numerous. The preachers were constantly represented as runagate horse-thieves, and as capable of everything vile under the sun. It is impossible at this time to form any idea of the opposition to class-meetings. They were represented as the scout class, where they concocted all their vile schemes. One would exclaim, "Why, do you think it possible? I saw a preacher invite a woman into their scout room and shut the door when her husband was out." Another, with an oath of imprecation, would say they should not do so with his wife. In short, the enemies of the Methodists, who were not much less abundant than the frogs in Egypt, represented class-meetings as the scenes of the worst of crimes, the place where plans of treason were concocted, and politics, with all their bitterness, dragged in.

Two great political parties were then in the field, namely, Federalists and Republicans, as they were then called. The Republican party were zealous for a high state of civil and religious liberty, therefore the Methodists were generally of this party, and when the story of their joining the French became stale, then they were going to join Jefferson to overturn our political institutions. When this also

became stale, they said the people were spending so much time in following after these runagates that they would raise nothing, and would have to be maintained as paupers. Men who were spending their time in drunkenness and riot would loudly talk in this way. A man who prided himself for his sagacity, stepped into a neighbor's and hastily exclaimed, "Have you heard the news?" "No; what is it?" He then straightened himself up, as if he had something very wonderful to reveal: "O, the news has just come that the Methodist preacher who was here last week, and raised such a fuss and noise among the weak women and children, has been followed and taken for stealing a horse. Ah! you know I have told you that these fellows would soon be found out, and their fuss would then be over, and we would not be troubled with them any longer."

The woman of the house said: "Yes, G., I know you did; but then when I heard that man preach, he seemed so solemn and so much in earnest that I thought he must be sincere."

"Yes, Mrs. B., I saw you wiping your eyes when he told that dolorous story about the woman that would not let her daughter join the Methodists, being soon after taken sick and dying in despair."

"Well, it was an affecting story."

"O yes, they are up to all such stuff, but you will soon find them out."

"When did they take the preacher?"

"Why I have not heard just when, but Mr. E. told me that Mr. N. told him so."

Mr. N. enters. "Well, Mr. N., I want you to tell Mrs. B. about that preacher being taken for stealing a horse."

"Why it was so reported, but it turns out to be a story that Tom told when he was drunk."

I have given this as a fair sample of what was then going on.

I will relate an incident, of which I was witness, between a young man and his sister. The young man said :

"There is Mrs. B., who has joined the Methodists. If she were a true Christian she would have to make an humble confession to our mother, about whom she has told such lies."

"You have not learned right about it, brother. Why as soon as she joined the Methodists she came to mother and made a very humble confession."

"I don't believe anything in her religion anyhow."

"If there was not a great change in her she would

not have done this; you know she was such a haughty woman."

It is almost unnecessary to say that this young woman became a Methodist.

The love-feasts, with closed doors, were also a bugbear. What terrible things were going on there; love enough, to be sure, such as it was, but it was anything but pure love. The sons of Belial would often make great boasts. They would see what was going on. A circumstance rather amusing happened at an occasion of this kind. A Quarterly Meeting was held at the house of a very large, athletic Irishman, who, together with his wife, had been converted under the preaching of Mr. Wesley before they left Europe. One Sabbath morning the brethren were collecting for love-feast. A young man, who thought himself very smart, swore that he would go in and see what they did there. He forcibly passed the doorkeeper, and rushed along some distance into the room, to the no small annoyance of the people. The big Irishman coolly rose up and said to him: "Young man, you must be afther going out of me house." "I won't," said the rowdy." "Then I'll be afther putting ye out," and suiting the action to the words, took him by the

shoulder and dragged him along with ease, in spite of his struggles, saying, "You may as well not hang back." Arriving at the door, he placed his brawny foot against him, and gave him a shove which landed him about one rod from the door, exclaiming: "There, go! and the blessing of the Lord go wid ye."

The good-humor with which the giant son of Erin had performed this feat so much amused the young man, that on helping himself to his legs again he laughed heartily; and the good Irish brother composedly returned to his seat and his devotions, and the meeting was no more disturbed.

Our religious meetings were sometimes disturbed by noises around the house. One time, when I was preaching in the evening at a private house, and the rooms crowded, I stood at the outer door to speak, and was advancing arguments to prove that it could not be true that God had decreed that men should sin against him. While I was on this point a heavy gun was fired off at my feet. Without being at all disturbed, I said: "Now can any man in his senses believe that God would have decreed that a son of Belial should fire off that gun to disturb his worship?" When I was once preaching at a place where Methodists had not before preached, a notori-

ously vicious man, who thought it was getting too warm for him, jumped up, and jabbering over something ran out. As the people were going out of the house, an old deacon, who had probably never before heard a Methodist, said: "I think Mr. Young must be a good man, for he cast out one devil. In the early state of Methodism, they were, strange as it may now seem, persecuted a great deal for kneeling in prayer. Sometimes their persecutors would even jump on them when they were knelt in prayer, as if they were beasts of burden. They would hoot and ridicule them for being plain in their dress and manners. All this may seem a small matter, but the fact is that nothing but the grace of God can reconcile anybody to being despised, scoffed at, scandalized, ridiculed, sneered at, and reproached by all around them. But that grace enabled the Methodists to rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake.

It will perhaps be imagined that these persecutors came only from the low, vile class. But no! those who considered themselves as the upper crust of society would consult about measures to imprison and even to kill the Methodists. Professed ministers of the Gospel, pastors, and deacons of Churches would

give every countenance to the vilest falsehoods and persecutions of the sect which was everywhere spoken against. I knew a Congregational preacher who published clandestinely such a piece of obscene falsehood, so indelicate and ridiculous, that when the authorship was detected it ruined him. Indeed, in the vile persecution, the drunkard, the lewd, the profane swearers, the liars, the deacons, and the priests were all found in the same ranks, and engaged in the same sacrilegious work.

When I preached in Boston a friend related to me an amusing incident connected with Jesse Lee, which I think the reader will be pleased to see published, as it shows the courage, perseverance, and great shrewdness of that distinguished herald of the Church. He had been preaching on the Common in Boston, under the famous elm-tree, and had an appointment to preach in the evening at Cambridge. In passing from Boston to Cambridge there is a very long bridge over an arm of the sea. Some of his friends learned that a club of base wretches had combined to waylay him on the bridge, and throw him off into the sea, and thus rid themselves of a man who so much disturbed their consciences by raising his warning voice against their wicked course. Information of this was

brought to Brother Lee, and he was advised not to go, and when he persisted in going he was advised to take a guard for his protection. But this he declined, and went alone. As he arrived in the evening twilight near the center of the bridge, he saw the banditti in waiting for him. But, nothing daunted, he jogged on with no marks of concern. As he approached them they rushed on him, seizing his horse by the bridle and him by his legs and arms, as was most convenient, in an eager manner. To one of less courage and shrewdness this would have been a frightful crisis; but with the most perfect self-composure, and a voice not the least tremulous, he said with the utmost *sang froid*, "What the devil are you all doing here?"

"O go on, go on," they replied, "you are not the man we want."

Thus the name of the devil gave him a safe pass through the banditti of the children of the devil. He went on to Cambridge and preached: some of the college students attended. At the close of the service one of them asked him a question in Greek; he answered it in High Dutch: another asked him a question in Hebrew; he answered him in Low Dutch: a third one said to them, "You had better let that man

alone ; you have asked him questions in two dead languages, and he has answered you in languages which you know nothing about."

I have sometimes known great revivals to grow out of seemingly small circumstances ; for instance, a man of my acquaintance, by the name of Morris, was to every appearance the most faultless man on religious subjects that I ever saw. One day when he was at work alone in his field, a Methodist preacher at work in another field at a little distance felt a strong impression on his mind that he ought to go and talk with Morris, and exhort him to seek salvation. He finally went, and told Morris his errand, and why he came. Morris surprised him by saying :

"I am very glad to see you. I have thought all day that I ought to go and inquire of you what I must do to be saved."

The preacher instructed him in the way of life. Morris became deeply awakened, and in a few days found the pearl of great price. He was unutterably happy, and went through the neighborhood like a torch-light, exhorting all to seek salvation. The conversion of this man resulted in one of the greatest revivals of religion known in that section of the country.

In a certain neighborhood in Vermont a society had been formed, but after a while it waned. Some died, some removed, some backslid, and others became cold. The weekly prayer-meeting was neglected, but one pious and persevering woman still went to the house of prayer, and sang and prayed as formerly. A certain young man having noticed her going to and from the house, had a curiosity to know what she did, and went before she arrived and concealed himself in the house. At the usual time she came in, opened her hymn book, and with much feeling sang a song of Zion; then solemnly kneeling down, in a loud voice most fervently prayed to God to revive his work. The young man came out from his hiding-place deeply affected, and requested the pious woman to pray for him, and teach him the way of life. This she joyfully did; he was brought into the glorious liberty of God's children. His conversion produced a great excitement in the neighborhood, and resulted in a gracious revival.

How forcibly are we taught by this circumstance not to give up the ship, nor relax our zeal in a time of declension. I have long been satisfied that the great cause of irreligion is thoughtlessness, and therefore whatever will wake up the mind to the subject

will be likely to produce a good result. In a certain place in Vermont a man and his wife, as is common in such cases, lived in jar and contention. A shrewd young man, who was himself irreligious, determined to try an experiment on them, and went to their house early in the morning, while they were yet in their sleeping apartments. He approached near the house and secreted himself behind a large stump, and in a loud voice, in guttural sounds, cried out :

“Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.”

They were startled, hurried to the window, and could see nothing ; they were much alarmed, and came to the conclusion that it was a supernatural voice. It aroused them to thoughtfulness in relation to their condition. The result was that they both became deeply awakened, attended to the means of grace, became happily converted, and lived, like Zachariah and Elizabeth, in all the ordinances and commandments of God, blameless. Query, Why do not all who read the Bible, and know that God actually does address those awakening words to them, lay it to heart and seek salvation ? The best of all was that the deep impression which so affected them, the young man thought ought also to impress his mind,

and thus he was led in earnest to seek the pardoning grace of God, united with the Church as a seeker of salvation, obtained the witness that God for Christ's sake had forgiven his sins, finally received a call to invite sinners to repentance, and became a zealous and successful preacher of the Gospel.

I was acquainted with a local preacher in Vermont, by the name of Ford, who was a man of great zeal, and useful in his labor of love. He gave me a startling account of his conversion. He had formerly been a member of a club of deists; they had their periodical meetings, and did all in their power to disparage Christianity, and in particular burned all the Bibles they could get. At length the president of the club was taken sick, and it became evident that he could not recover. He was seized with the utmost horror, much like Altamont, of whom Dr. Young has given such a graphic description. All the terrors of utter despair came upon him. In this condition he sent for all the members of the club to come and see him, and when they came he addressed them in the most moving terms, saying to them that they were wrong, both in their sentiments and course. They told him that he was out of his head. He replied that although he was in great pain of body and agony

of mind, his powers of reasoning were never stronger ; that, to satisfy themselves on this subject, if they would bring up anything on philosophy he would soon convince them that his mind was as strong as ever it had been. He then exhorted them, with great earnestness, to abandon their sentiments and course and seek salvation. "As for myself," said he, "I have no hope ; I have sinned beyond forgiveness. I shall soon die, and go to eternal torments. But you may repent and find pardon and grace. And although I shall be lost, I can have no wish that you should be lost with me."

It was a scene of awful solemnity and consternation ; very little was said by any except what was said by the dying man, but the looks of all indicated fearful forebodings. "As his last moments approached," said Brother Ford, "it was deeply painful to witness his agony. And just as his soul was leaving the tenement of clay, it seemed to have a glance at the horrid abyss into which it was just to make its final plunge. He uttered a frightful scream ; his whole frame was distorted, and his eyes looked wild and terrific, and nearly started from their sockets, and we all stood in silent horror as his last groans died away upon our ears. It is perhaps almost unnecessary to

say the club never met again, many abandoned their infidelity, others became silent about it, and others, like myself, earnestly sought and found 'Him of whom Moses and the prophets wrote,' Jesus of Nazareth, the Saviour of sinners."

While I am on this subject I will relate an incident which, though not directly connected with the general object of this work, I think should be chronicled. I had an uncle, John Young, who was a very distinguished deist; he had a good education and a great stock of general knowledge, added to a brilliant mind and great powers of eloquence. In his time the clergymen of New England, or at least too great a proportion of them, knew nothing of experimental religion, and preached for filthy lucre's sake. My uncle unhappily judged of Christianity from what he saw of these men, and rejected it altogether. He wrote a treatise against it which, if it had been published, would probably have been more formidable than anything of the kind which ever has been published, and would have been very likely to have corrupted the minds of many of the young and inexperienced. But the finger of God so directed, that when he was about to get it published he was taken sick. His sickness, though lingering, grew worse till

his life was despaired of. In this condition he became awakened and abandoned his infidelity, as infidels generally do when they see death near. As Dr. Young justly says,

“Fools men may live, but fools they cannot die.”

His awakening became deep. He asked my mother what he should do, and although she had not then professed religion she directed him to the Saviour's grace. He sought and found it, to the joy of his heart. He then told my mother all he wanted to live for was to counteract his infidelity by preaching Christ and his Gospel. He died in joyful hope of immortality. Let all who may ever think of adopting the gloomy system of infidelity pause and consider that it will make them wretched even in this life. What can be more gloomy than to think of dying like the ox or the swine !

CHAPTER VII.

Methodist Preachers not allowed to celebrate the Rites of Matrimony in New England — Marriage performed contrary to Law — Lawsuit instituted — Dropped — The Physician's Wife — Power of Christian Example — Incident — Female Exhorter — Eloquence — A wicked Father — City Life — Lured from the Path of Piety — Sickness — Reflection — Price of the Soul — End of a Scoffer — Fearful Death of a Slanderer — Father's Imprecation — Horrible Decree — Merrill and the Calvinistic Missionary — Methodist and Calvinist Preachers on board a Packet — Controversy — Intolerance in New England — Mode of settling Ministers — Ordination Scenes — Taxes for the Support of the Ministry — Sample of Bigotry — Life of Bishop Hedding — Clerical Convention and Methodist Preachers — Interesting Colloquy — Decision in Religion — Conversion of a Colonel — The Author's Preceptor — His Advice — Reproof on a Steamer — Bishop Coke — An Effectual Sermon.

BUT I have wandered, and will come back to the incidents of early Methodism in New England. Our preachers were not then allowed to celebrate the rites of matrimony ; that is to say, although a fair construction of the law would give them the right, yet the spirit of persecution was so remorseless against them, that if they did it they would be subject to expensive lawsuits, which in their poverty they could not sustain ; and our young and blushing lovers were

obliged to go to our persecutors to be united in sacred wedlock. Brother Joseph Merrill, the same who in early life came through the woods and over the hills to have me instruct him in the way of salvation, gave me a particular account of the way and manner by which this right was first obtained. He said that when he was stationed in Boston a Brother Benney, a member of our Church, who was a man of great wealth and influence, came to him one day and told him that a daughter of his was soon to be married, and he wished him to celebrate the nuptials. Brother Merrill replied: "I know that in law and justice I have a right to do it, but it would subject me to a lawsuit, which I am too poor to bear."

"Never mind that," said Brother Benney; "I will stand in the gap and pay all expenses."

"Very well," said Brother Merrill, "I will do it then," and accordingly he performed the nuptial ceremony. It was like kicking a hornets' nest, and elicited the following:

"Have you heard the news?"

"No; what?"

"Why a Methodist preacher has presumed to perform the rites of marriage."

"Is it possible! Ah, this is getting up stairs pretty

fast. I tell you these fellows must be checked up, or they will soon think that they have the same right that the clergy of the standing order have.”

“You are right. But I understand that measures are about to be taken that will learn these babblers some manners.”

“I am glad to hear that; it is quite time it should be done.”

In the mean time the high-priests, the lawyers, and scribes met in conclave to consult on measures to punish this outrage. In this council the enormity of the outrage is set forth in bold relief, and it is concluded that if decided measures are not taken to check these disorganizers, they will be assuming all the rights and privileges of the orthodox clergy. As the final result a first-rate lawyer is engaged to prosecute Brother Merrill and push it to the extent of the law, that it may be a stopper to all such outrages in future.

In the mean time Brothers Benney and Merrill, both of whom were very shrewd men, kept a watch over the movements, and Benney now engaged a lawyer of splendid talents to defend Brother Merrill. He put into the hands of that lawyer the history of the origin and progress of Methodism in England and America, and desired him, as soon as he could be suf-

ficiently informed on the subject, to have an interview with the lawyer engaged on the side of oppression, as such an interview might possibly save the vexation and trouble of a lawsuit. He accordingly informed himself well on the subject without delay, and called on the other lawyer and said to him :

“Are you engaged to prosecute Mr. Merrill for having performed a marriage ceremony?”

“I am.”

“I presume that as a magnanimous lawyer you would not wish to be engaged in an unjust cause, especially if you were sure that you would lose it.”

“I would not.”

“Well, I think that I can easily satisfy you that such is the case in which you are about to enter.”

“Well, if so I shall be glad to know it in time.”

“Let me then say to you, that by close attention to the subject I am convinced that instead of being as we have been in the habit of thinking them, a wild, incoherent, unorganized sect, the Methodists are in fact more perfect in their organization than any other Church in the country, and that there is no Protestant Church whose ordinations are more legal than theirs. You can then have no possible hope of success, except from the strong prejudice which here exists

against them, which may worm itself into the court and prevent it from doing justice; but you cannot calculate on any ultimate advantage from this source. Mr. Benney, you know, is a very wealthy, influential, and decided man; he is a member of the Methodist Church, and has pledged himself to defend Mr. Merrill; and if he cannot have justice here he will take it to the United States Court, and it will be tried in the South, where the Methodists are far more popular than our Congregationalists, and will obtain ample justice."

"Are you certain of these things?"

"I am, from sources which cannot be erroneous."

"Well, I will advise them to drop it, and at all events I will have nothing to do with it."

No more was heard of any prosecution, and from that time our preachers were left quietly to perform matrimonial ceremonies. Patient suffering under bad treatment often has a great effect in illustrating the practical nature of Christianity. A distinguished gentleman mentioned to me a circumstance which strongly illustrates this. The wife of a physician joined the Methodists, but her husband was much opposed to them, and used various means to prevent her from attending their religious meetings, but without success; finally, when a quarterly meeting was

coming on, he told her that she was in danger of being sick, and must be blistered. She knew well that his object was to keep her from going to meeting, but submitted patiently to have a large blister put on her chest. When the doctor considered the contrast between her conduct and his it carried conviction to his heart, and he soon began in deep earnest to seek the grace which would imbue the soul with such patience, and found it, to his great joy.

Another incident, related to me by an old Methodist in Boston, was as follows: A man in the habit of spending his earnings at grogeries and ale-houses, those sinks of hell, one night took home with him, at a late hour two of his comrades. When he arrived at home all was silent, and his care-worn wife asleep in bed. He roughly awoke her, and ordered her to get up and prepare them a supper. Her means for doing it were very scanty. Of this she said nothing, but proceeded patiently to prepare the best repast that she could, while her wicked husband loaded her with imprecations for not getting their supper quicker and better. As she slipped out of the room, his comrade said to him, with an air of wonder :

“Gracious heaven! what have you got for a wife? Is she an angel in human form?”

“Why, she is nothing but a d—d Methodist.”

“Well, sir, nowhere have I seen a human being endure such abuse with such perfect patience.” It so affected them that they broke off from their dissipation, and both became pious Methodists.

Brother Willard, with whom I traveled as my senior in the first year of my ministry, told me that the circumstance which led to his and many of his friends' conversion was thus: They were all violently opposed to the Methodists, and one day a child of the family had a sudden attack of sickness, and they nearly despaired of its life, and were all in a storm of grief. At this crisis Brother Bostwick, of precious memory, was passing by, and noticing the distress, called. Having been educated a physician he understood the nature of the case, and directed them what to do. To their great joy the child soon recovered. This awakened the strongest gratitude toward Brother Bostwick, and inclined them to go and hear him preach, and resulted in the whole family becoming converted and joining the Methodist Church.

It was common in those days for some of the more gifted brethren to exhort at the close of the sermon; this was generally attended with stirring

and good influence. This practice was not confined to the male members of the Church, but our pious and talented sisters often exhorted with much effect. There was a traveling preacher by the name of Bishop, whose wife was a very gifted and deeply devoted woman. She always traveled with him, and uniformly exhorted after him, and she was so effective and happy in this effort of love that the people were much interested in listening to her. There was a young woman by the name of Hannah Herrington, who had a most extraordinary gift of public speaking. Her heart and life seemed to be of unsullied purity. When she spoke she appeared to possess a holy unction in the very highest degree. She would rise from her seat, as there was a pause made at the close of preaching, with a modesty so expressive that every tongue would be hushed. She would commence, in a subdued tone of voice, with language chaste and expressive; she would presently step up on a seat and speak quicker and louder; her ideas seemed to flow by inspiration, everybody would be moved; you could not command your feelings; you would find yourself drawn along by an impulsive torrent, and the whole assembly would soon be bathed in tears. I have listened to

many of the most eloquent speakers of the country, who have been ornaments to the pulpit and the bar ; but I have never heard one who could produce such favorable effects as she would ; and I would rather have her talent for speaking than be emperor of the nations.

It is undoubtedly true that, in general, punishments and reward are not given in this life, but this will be done in a future state, particularly at the day of judgment. Yet there are isolated cases in which persons are to some extent punished here. In the early history of Methodism in the State of New York, the only daughter of a wealthy man attended on the ministry of our preachers, became deeply awakened, earnestly sought and found the pearl of great price, and joined the Methodists. Her parents opposed her with great violence, ridiculed, frowned, threatened, but to no effect ; she rejoiced the more. At length the father fell on a plan which, alas ! proved too fatal. With much seeming kindness he said to her : “ My dear Harriet, we regret that we have opposed you so much about being a Methodist, and have determined to do it no more. But you can serve God as well in satin as in sackcloth. We want you to dress well and appear to advantage. I want you to go with me to the

city of New York, and become acquainted with good society." Observing that Harriet gave a hesitating look, he continued, "and there you will have a fine opportunity of hearing Methodist preachers of the highest order of talent and eloquence." At this the countenance of Harriet assumed a cheerful look. "Your mother will have you an outfit provided. Now be ready as soon as may be, and we will have a pleasant journey." This was so plausible and seemingly kind that she was not aware of the fatal snare. When her classmates and her preacher heard of it, he drew a long sigh and said: "Poor sister Harriet knows nothing of the danger which awaits her."

They started on their journey. The father was lavish in his kindness; the beauties of scenery of nature and art engaged her attention, and were much descanted on by him. He conversed freely and pleasantly on everything except religion, and whenever she would speak of that he would adroitly waive the subject. On arriving at the city they put up at a splendid house. She was cautiously kept from seeing the vices of the city, lest she should become disgusted. She was introduced into the most polished and fashionable society. Her father, one day,

stepped in from a walk out in the city, and said :
 “ Well, Harriet, I have engaged that you shall
 attend this evening a very pleasant and elegant
 party. It won’t do to go to that in country style ;
 the belles of the city would stare at you. Come,
 this lady will take you to the mantua-makers, and
 have you put in suitable style for the party.” Her
 head dropped hesitatingly. The lady, who had been
 let into the secret, advanced, took her gently by the
 arm, and said, “ Come, Miss Harriet, I shall be
 happy to wait on you, and I know just where to take
 you.” Entering at the mantua-maker’s, she said to
 her : “ The father of this young lady is a very
 wealthy gentleman from the country, and has brought
 his daughter to learn the city accomplishments, and
 wants her to be fixed in proper style for the best
 society of the city.” The mantua-maker, highly
 pleased to have such a customer, was fascinating in
 her manners, and assured them that nothing should
 be neglected in fitting her in proper style imme-
 diately. Everything was examined to obtain the
 richest and most fashionable articles of dress, and she
 was in the shortest order equipped in the highest
 style of the city. The lady said to the mantua-
 maker : “ Her father will soon call and settle your

bill;" and turning to Harriet, she said: "This lady will send a servant with the dress you leave to your quarters." They leave the shop and return back. Poor Harriet has now a gorgeous attire and a heavy heart! How different does she now appear from the pious, humble Methodist, meeting in class and at the prayer-meetings, and sitting under the droppings of the sanctuary, and tasting the good word of God and the powers of the world to come. To herself she says: "O how I wish I was back with my classmates! but I have no remedy. I see that I must submit to this painful course till I can return home, and these gewgaws shall then be thrown aside, and I will joyfully join my beloved brethren in singing,

‘How vain are all things here below,
How false, and yet how fair;
Each pleasure hath its poison too,
And every sweet a snare.’”

Sabbath morning arrives; Harriet greets it with joy, and chants to herself these lovely lines :

“Welcome sweet day of rest,
That saw the Lord arise!
Welcome to this reviving breast
And these rejoicing eyes.”

She goes to her father, and with a smiling countenance says: "Well, father, you told me what good Methodist preachers they had in the city; we will go to-day and hear them."

"Well, my dear, I should be happy to go with you, but the Episcopalian Church in this city is much the most splendid of any in this country, their pastor is a very eloquent man, and you will be pleased, for their doctrine is the same as that of the Methodists." She yielded to the persuasion and went with her father. Everything exhibited the most gorgeous display; her mind was nearly made giddy by it, and she almost forgot that her Saviour, for whose pretended worship all this display was got up, was born in a manger. Poor Harriet's mind was confused; her love grew cold; by degrees she lost her sense of danger, and finally, before she left the city, she was persuaded to attend a ball, which, her father told her, was merely got up to celebrate a great military victory, and that they must of course be patriotic.

Her father now congratulated himself that he had accomplished his object, and that, thereafter, there would be no difficulty in keeping Harriet from the meetings of the noisy Methodists.

They start for home, but a new trouble now presents

itself. Harriet, unaccustomed to being out in the evening in such light attire as that furnished by the mantua-maker, took a severe cold, which was renewed, and she was afflicted with a dry cough; but they hurried home, hoping that their family physician, who was a man in high medical repute, would soon be able to remove all difficulty. This hope, however, was futile; her cough increased, and the distressed parents were finally obliged to yield to the distressing conviction that Harriet was sinking into consumption. Her classmates and her preacher called to see her, but with reluctance her parents admitted them to her apartment. How melancholy was the change; the rose of health had left her cheek; all the sprightly buoyancy she once had was gone, and her once beautiful form had wasted away; her mind was gloomy and desponding; she had no more of either strength or a heart joyfully to sing:

“O how happy are they
Whom their Saviour obey.”

The preacher attempted to speak with her on the subject of religion, but the mother approached him and said, in a low tone: “The doctor says we must not suffer her to be spoken to on the subject of religion.” Thus the preacher was thwarted in his pious effort.

Suffer me here to make a reflection. It has long appeared to me that doctors who debar their patients from religious instruction, are the most effectual agents and accomplices in their everlasting ruin. Her classmates and pastor left the apartment with the painful thought that they would never again meet their dear Harriet, with whom they once so much rejoiced in the service of their God and Saviour, in this world or in that which is to come. Harriet sank fast under the fatal disease, and a little before her departure from the shores of time she requested that her gaudy attire, which was obtained in the city, should be brought to her. She took it in her pale trembling hand and said: "This is the price of my soul; for this I have given up my Saviour and my hope of heaven; and you, my parents, by the fatal snare which you set for me, have been the means of my everlasting ruin." A violent cough came on, she suffocated and expired. Now what more severe punishment could be inflicted in this world upon her parents than to be stung with the painful reflection that, through their enmity to God and religion, they had destroyed both the body and soul of their only daughter.

I have been the more particular in giving this painful circumstance, partly because it illustrates the

early state of our Church, and partly because it may serve as a beacon to young Christians, by showing them what snares are set for their feet, and that the only safe point for resisting evil is at its first appearance. Had Harriet refused to go with her father to the city, or if he would force her to go, absolutely refused to partake of the follies and vices thereof, she would have been safe ; but when the first step in the road to ruin was taken there was no stopping-place. It may often happen that one imprudent step may be the start in a course which will lead to eternal ruin. When Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom he laid the foundation for a world of troubles, losses, crime, and woe.

I heard one of our most distinguished preachers in the East, near fifty years ago, relate a thrilling incident. He stated that a camp-meeting was held near the residence of a man notorious for his opposition to the Methodists. The day after the camp-meeting was closed a friend of his, with his wife, made them a visit, who, together with himself and wife, went out to the camp-ground, and when there he said, "I will show you how the mourners, as they called them, acted." He then threw himself on the ground, screamed and tossed. His wife said to him, "Don't

act in this way," but he still continued. His guests said to him, "Don't continue in this way, it is unpleasant to us," but to no effect. It became evident that he could not stop; and he continued it until stopped by death. Let scoffers think of this.

A very distinguished gentleman, of much intelligence and piety, informed me that a certain man of high standing, but who was much opposed to the Methodists, told a very bad story of a Methodist preacher. He and two other persons determined to investigate it, and called on the preacher and asked him about it. With an air of candor and solemnity, which convinced them that he told the truth, he said that the story was utterly false, and he could form no idea what should have induced the man to tell it. They then determined to go and see the man. They selected three persons, of whom my informant was one, to go and inquire of the man about it. They found him in his field and informed him of their business. He appeared agitated and made an effort to speak, but fell instantly dead on the ground.

While on this subject I will relate another incident of a startling nature which took place in England more than fifty years ago. I read it in the *Arminian Magazine*, an excellent work, which was published

by Mr. Wesley. It is there related of a stonemason that he was at work in a stone quarry with two of his sons, then lusty lads, who besought him to let them have a meat-pie for Christmas, then near at hand. The father became impatient, and swore that he wished they were both dead that he might make a meat-pie of them. The instant the words were out of his mouth a vivid flash of lightning struck them both dead. The melancholy event was published at the request of the bereaved and penitent father.

But to return to early Methodism in New England. It is well known that the great obstacle to the spread of Methodism here was the prevalence and influence of Calvinism, which was then presented in its native deformity, such as the damnation of infants, the horrible decree of reprobation, the utter impossibility of our doing any more good or less evil than we do, both the good and the evil being precisely determined. As Methodism advanced a few bold spirits still kept their ground, determined to be consistent with themselves at all events; but in general they would undertake to soften it down and talk about moderate Calvinism, as if the features of that heart-chilling system could be modified to make it

less obnoxious ; but the fact is that the very first position, that God has foreordained all things whatsoever come to pass, necessarily drags all the most shocking parts of Calvinism after it. To hold then to Calvinian election and deny reprobation is, as Calvin says, quite silly and childish ; and to pretend that God is not the cause of sin, and that men can do different from what they do, upon the principles of Calvinism, is an insult to common sense.

Brother Joseph Merrill, of whom I have already spoken, was a remarkably clear-headed man, and always could filter out the most subtle features of Calvinism. On one occasion where he preached there was a Calvinistic missionary to hear him, and when the services were closed he wished to ask Brother Merrill one or two questions, which, of course, was assented to.

“Did God design that Adam should sin?” said he, “or did he design that he should not sin? or had he no design at all about it?”

Brother Merrill replied: “First, it is not true that God designed that Adam should sin; secondly, it is not true that God designed that he should not sin; and thirdly, it is not true that he had no designs about it.”

“Why,” said the missionary, “what do you mean?”

“I mean, sir,” was the reply, “to show this people that there is a subtle sophism involved in your questions. You intend that they shall take it for granted that one of these three things must be true, whereas neither are true. But the truth is, that God designed that Adam should be free to sin or not to sin, without designing which he should do. Now,” continued Brother Merrill, “I will ask you a question: Did God design that Adam should sin?”

The missionary paused, but finally said, “The question is not a fair one.”

“That,” said Brother Merrill, “is very strange for you to say, when it is your own question returned to you simplified, and not artfully interwoven with two other questions as you gave it to me. Now, sir, it must be true that God did design that Adam should sin or that he did not so design, and I want you to state which;” but he would not, and Brother Merrill turned to the eager assembly and said: “You see the gentleman will not answer my question, although it is his own returned to him simplified; and the reason he will not answer it is, that he dare not; he knows that if he says that God did not design that Adam should sin, he gives up Calvinism; and if he says God

did design that Adam should sin, that I will turn on him with the question, How came he to know that God's designs were in direct opposition to his law, which forbade the sin of Adam, and, in short, all sin? The gentleman of course believes, and every real Calvinist believes, that God did design that Adam should sin, his holy law to the contrary notwithstanding; but then that position is so shocking that he dare not avow it." If the people on returning home had been as free of all other errors as they were of Calvinism, they would have been in an enviable condition.

This same Merrill, together with a large number of old Methodist preachers, was returning home from a General Conference, and fell in company, on a packet-ship, with several Calvinistic preachers, on their return from a convention. For a while all was quiet, but Brother Merrill wanted to have some discussion going on, and thought that he would drop some insinuation which might be noticed and start a discussion, and he would slip in an older preacher to take the field. But as he dropped the gauntlet it was taken up, and he could not slip out thus. He found himself grappling with a very learned and shrewd antagonist, who had received his theology far more from the Andover school than from the teach-

ings of Jesus of Nazareth. They were immediately surrounded by all the preachers and other passengers, and as many of the officers and crew as could be spared from duty. I will give the substance of the debate, calling the Calvinist C, and Brother Merrill M.

C. I believe you hold to falling from grace?

M. Not exactly; we hold to persevering in grace.

C. But you hold that persons having grace may so fall as to perish everlastingly?

M. Yes, we so hold.

C. What then could the Saviour mean when he said that his sheep should never perish, and that none should pluck them out of his hand?

M. But you will observe that his sheep hear his voice and follow him.

C. Of course they do.

M. Did David hear the voice of the Saviour and follow him when he went into adultery and murder?

C. Well, admit that he did not; what then?

M. If he did not he of course was not a sheep; and to get him into heaven in this fallen state, you must open the everlasting gates to let an adulterer and murderer in.

C. But David, you know, repented.

M. Yes, and I also know that his repentance was not a work of stern necessity ; and will not you admit that David was a free agent, and as such could have continued in sin ?

C. Yes, I admit that.

M. Then if he had continued in sin, and could not die in that state, we should have him among us yet an old sinner.

C. I know that David is your hobby.

M. Well, you must let us ride him till you take him from us.

C. But I will prefer going into the investigation of the main point of difference between us.

M. Very well ; but you led off on this point, so lead off on any other that you may choose.

C. You Methodists talk much about free agents ; but after all free agency only consists in choosing and doing what we do choose and do freely, but have no power to choose and do otherwise. For example, we cannot choose without a preference, and this is determined by the real superior good in what we choose. Thus a man cannot choose a cent in preference to a dollar, nor a dollar in preference to an eagle, so that after all the power of choice is not in the agent choosing but in the object chosen.

M. Before we proceed on this point it will be right to consider the meaning of our terms; by choice, or choosing, shall we understand a decision of the mind to take one thing and leave the other, or one course instead of the other?

C. Yes, that is a fair definition of the terms.

M. If I felt the least inclination not to meet you on your subtle metaphysical course on this question I should just waive it, and take a plain common-sense course, and say, what is undoubtedly true, if man were in a state of perfect purity, and a perfect harmony existed between the understanding and will, if he had no corrupt propensities to entice him to any course but such as the understanding and judgment should approve—then the view which you have taken would have more plausibility. But nothing is more certain than that free agency has a power to cut off the natural communication between the understanding and will. It is certain that nothing is more common than for sinners to do things which they well know it would be better not to do. They choose darkness rather than light, when the understanding teaches them that light is better than darkness; and when sinners sin against light and knowledge they could truly say,

“I know the right and I approve it too ;
I hate the wrong and still the wrong pursue.”

But as you seem to prefer that we shall seek for religious truth in subtle metaphysics which were never taught by our Saviour, I will follow in the wake and demonstrate that your reasoning is erroneous even on your own premises ; your ground is that there can be no decision of the mind to take one thing and leave the other, or take one course instead of the other, without a real or imaginary preference. Suppose a beggar should solicit charity of a gentleman who should hold out to him two gold pieces of equal value, and it is equally convenient for him to take one as the other, and say to him take your choice of them : now, sir, if you are right, the beggar cannot take either of them, because he cannot decide without a preference, and there is no preference.

C. But it is more convenient to take one than the other.

M. That, sir, is begging the question, for I have supposed it to be equally convenient. Or suppose again the Almighty has occasion to use two globes, one in the northern and the other in the southern hemisphere. He makes the two globes so precisely alike that Infinite Wisdom can see no difference

between them, and he is about to put one of them in the northern hemisphere, and they are so situated that it is equally eligible and convenient to take the one as the other. If you are right, the Almighty must be defeated in his object, because he cannot decide without a preference, and here is no preference. Why, sir, I can demonstrate that even a jack-ass knows your theory to be false, for if he were placed at an equal distance between two stacks of hay of the same appearance, and should become pressed with hunger, your theory would hold him there until he would die of starvation; but without perplexing himself with your metaphysics he would immediately take measures to satisfy the demands of his appetite. [A pause ensued.] I shall be pleased to hear, sir, how you will undertake to clear up this difficulty. [The pause continues.] You must be aware that this is the great pivot on which our systems turn. If you fail to establish your position your system must fall. [Still a pause, and a whisper is heard in the crowd, "I pity that man."] So do I.

Mr. Merrill now looks round and says: "Gentlemen, we are all aware that our different systems rise or fall on this point. Now if any other imagines that he can wind his way through this difficulty he

may consider himself at liberty to take the gentleman's place and defend his ground." A long pause ensued, and the company scattered. The Methodist preachers after this received very marked attention on the packet

When we look at the character and teachings of our blessed Lord and Saviour, everything exhibits the most perfect sample of meekness, gentleness, and kindness which can possibly be conceived. To do good for evil, to love our enemies, and pray for them who hate us, persecute and despitefully use us, was inculcated by the example and precepts of our divine Lord and Master. The entire spirit of the religion of Jesus of Nazareth was such as Mr. Wesley beautifully represents it to be in these lines :

"Mild, sweet, serene, and tender is her mood,
Nor dull with sadness, nor with lightness free ;
Against example resolutely good,
Fervent in zeal, and warm in charity."

How strange that the wickedness of man should ever so totally pervert the mild and gracious system of religion established by the meek and lowly Jesus, as to make themselves and others believe that they were adhering to that religion, by plunging into the most heartless cruelties, and put their mind to the rack to

invent means of torture, by dark and dreary dungeons, by wheels of torture, by tearing in pieces joint by joint the victims of their infernal rage, and inflicting on others the most horrid sufferings by slow consuming fires. Humanity shudders at the very thought of the millions of victims of such infernal cruelties. And all this under the most hypocritical pretense of being the followers of Him whose whole life and doctrine was a comment on the heavenly song of the angelic host: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

It would have been well for the Protestants if this intolerant spirit had been confined to the mother of harlots, so deeply stained with the blood of the martyrs; but, alas! even Protestants have drunk at the deadly pool, and been fired with the horrid spirit of intolerance and persecution. The Puritan pilgrims fled from this grim monster in the old world to the wild tangled woodlands in the new. It would certainly seem presumable that having seen and felt the injustice and cruelty of the wicked spirit of intolerance, and having fled from it, they would have been in no danger of falling into it. But, alas for poor human nature! scarcely were they settled in their new habitation, when the infernal spirit of intolerance so

seized upon their minds, that they seemed to think that they were doing God service by hanging his humble followers. As they spread out and extended their settlements, the same spirit and feeling wormed itself into all the ramifications of society. Their method of supporting the Gospel, as they called it, in New England, was thus: A man working out of college, with no other pretensions to piety than an attachment to the peculiar doctrines of Calvinism, and a hatred to all who did not agree with him in doctrine, would go into a township, which usually embraced an extent of territory about six miles square, and where they had no township priest, and preach, or rather read a sermon. A consultation was then generally held by the tavern-keeper, the general, the colonel, and the squire, who really cared no more for the salvation of souls, or the glory of God, than Alexander the coppersmith. If they thought his talents and eloquence to be such as would answer their wishes, (it was hardly taken into account whether he was truly a man of God, or whether God had called him to the work of the ministry,) they would give him a call ; that is, they would make him an offer, subject to the ratification of the township, of an annual salary which would afford him a handsome support.

If the arrangements were all satisfactory, a meeting of the township was called, but there was no doubt of the meeting acting in accordance with the wishes of the aristocracy; it would of course do as they recommended, and vote that he should be settled as the priest of the township, with the annual salary which had been stipulated; an amount to pay this salary would be levied as a tax on the people of the township, and the time would be fixed for him to be ordained. The ordination ceremonies would be attended to under circumstances very different from the laying on of hands in the apostolic day, and from the way it was done in our Church. Instead of fasting and praying, and all being done with deep solemnity, the fiddlers, dancers, tipplers, and all lovers of frolic and mirth would assemble, and the scene would resemble more an Irish fair than the deep solemnities of a sacred ordination in a Christian Church. Let it not be thought that I speak these things in wantonness. No, indeed! when I think of the mournful effects of such a course on the prospects of the salvation of immortal souls, I would exclaim with the prophet: "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night" over the desolations of Zion.

The law provided that if any person living in the township as above, produced a certificate that he belonged to and contributed to the support of some other sect, he should be released from paying the aforesaid tax. So it will be seen that, aside from the spleen which they had toward the Methodists, growing out of their own imaginary pious and orthodox opposition to these innovators, as they called them, they had an interested motive to oppose them, for those who went off and quit paying their taxes to the settled ministry would of course leave it heavier on the others; and if those who went off multiplied, it would become so oppressive to the remainder that they would dismiss their pastor, a circumstance which was becoming rather frequent. Thus the Methodist preachers had to meet a strong combined interested opposition from every side. And besides all this, all the drunkards, the lewd, the profane, and satanic opposition, were arrayed against them, because they set their faces against all sin; on the same principle as our Saviour said: "Me the world hateth, because I testify of it that the works thereof are evil."

Under these circumstances, nothing short of the interference of God in their behalf could have given them success. I am confident there never was a more

subtle, fixed, and determined opposition to any set of men who were laboring to do good than that which manifested itself toward the early Methodist preachers, and this continued for many years, vigorous and unabating.

As a sample of this spirit of bigotry, take the following: I was requested by an afflicted man who had lost his wife, to perform the funeral services on the mournful occasion. A man lived near the bereaved sufferer who was one of the most reputable members of the Congregational Church of that place. He attended the funeral services, and on this account his priest would not suffer him to partake of the Lord's Supper at their subsequent communion. At length, however, a change came over the bigoted clergy, and we were surprised to find ourselves treated with seeming kindness. By turning to the Life of Bishop Hedding, pages 118, 119, and 120, an account may be seen of a reverend doctor of divinity who seems to have been very zealous against the Methodists, but subsequently became quite friendly toward them. And this was a very common occurrence; but the cause of it was unknown to us, and I believe to this day has never been much understood by the Methodists.

Brother Joseph Merrill informed me that he became acquainted with a worthy gentleman who had formerly been a deacon of a Congregational Church, but left them and joined the Methodists; and that man informed him, that when in that Church he attended a large convention of Congregational clergymen and deacons, of which he gave this account:

When they had got through with their ordinary business, the question came up, "What shall we do in relation to the Methodist preachers? We have exerted ourselves to keep them down. We have told the people that they are unlearned heretics, disorganizers etc., but still they are rapidly gaining ground; what farther is to be done?" After a pause several clergymen rose in succession and expressed their views, the substance of which was, that the same course of persecution should be pursued, but with more vigor. At length one arose who was highly distinguished for his talents and penetration, and addressed the convention thus:

"I have listened with much interest and attention, to the remarks which have been made on this perplexing question. I have been a close observer of the passing events of the day, especially of those which directly affect the interests of the Church; I

have seen that the Methodists, in spite of all of our efforts against them, are rapidly gaining ground; I have felt much solicitude that something might be done to check them, but I confess that it appears to me that what we have been doing gives success to their efforts. The people think that we persecute them, and this enlists their sympathy for those who they consider persecuted. We have tried much to make capital of their want of literature. And it is true that in general their literary advantages have been very limited in comparison with ours. And yet they acquire a great stock of the most useful knowledge. They are constantly mingling with the people, and enter into all their feelings, wishes, and wants; and their discourses are on a level with the capacity of their hearers, and addressed to their understanding and feelings, and produce a thrilling effect, while our discourses shoot over their heads, and they remain unaffected. My counsel, therefore, is that we change essentially our attitude toward them, and treat them with kindness as brothers and fellow-laborers, and when convenient exchange with them. This will stop them from representing us to the people as dumb dogs, and greedy dogs which can never have enough; which in fact has had no small influence

with the people, to our great annoyance. And besides all this, there is another view of the subject, which I confess with me is one of no small consideration. After all that we have said in disparagement of these men, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that they are reformers. They reach a large class of the people that we do not. The ignorant, the drunken, the profane, listen to their homespun, but zealous and energetic discourses with deep attention; they feel, they sigh, they weep; they seek salvation; they are convicted and converted. They break forth in joyful sound of praise, and lead a pious life. Is there not then reason to believe after all that the hand of God is with them? And if so, may not we be found fighting against God if we oppose them in this great work?"•

This discourse, coming as it did from one of their best and ablest men, delivered so much in the spirit of candor, and embracing so much truth, had a great effect, and it was finally and unanimously agreed that they would hereafter change their course toward the Methodist preachers.

It is very important for all persons who determine to be religious that they should be firm, bold, and decided in their course. When the enemies of

religion find a vacillating professor, they always annoy him; but when they find one who is firm and decided, they venerate and respect him, and will give him no annoyance, or if they attempt it they will soon be cowed themselves. I am acquainted with an eminent preacher of the Gospel who, when a young man, was sitting in a crowd of his old associates, listening to a faithful herald of the cross warning sinners to flee from the wrath to come. He felt he must not continue in the road of death, and when the preacher opened the door of the Church, to receive for their instruction and benefit any who were desirous of laying hold of eternal life, he rose up from among his comrades and started to go forward. They caught hold of him and said, "Had you not better stop and count the cost?" He replied: "It is no difference what the cost may be; I am determined, by the grace of God, to save my soul." He soon found Him of whom Moses and the prophets wrote, and became a very successful preacher of the Gospel.

In the early days of Methodism and persecution, two men of wealth and high standing, one a colonel, and the other a general, lived near neighbors. The colonel went to a camp-meeting, became awakened and converted, and joined the Methodist Church. He was

extremely happy, and shouted aloud the praises of his God and Saviour. When the meeting was closed he took an affectionate leave of the preachers and brethren, and went on his way rejoicing to his home, where he arrived late in the evening. The general had heard of the enthusiasm, as he called it, of the colonel, and had formed his plan to browbeat him out of it as soon as he returned home, and accordingly came to see the colonel early in the morning. Advancing with a lofty step and uplifted countenance, and a sarcastic glance, mingled with an affected friendship, and a smile of triumph, he stepped forward and extended his hand to the colonel, which was cordially received. Anticipating his victory, he said with much *sang froid*: "Well, colonel, I understand that you have joined the Methodists?" The colonel, holding the general's hand, said in tones of great firmness: "Yes, blessed be God, a right bawling Methodist." This was a terrible damper to the general, whose countenance fell; but he was not yet let off. The colonel still held his hand, gave him a look of thrilling interest, told him how wonderfully God had converted him and how happy he was, and exhorted the general to seek salvation. The poor general got away as soon as possible, and returned home worse

chopfallen than Lord Cornwallis was when he surrendered the British army, with which he had boasted that he would conquer America, to our beloved Washington. The colonel was no more assailed by the general; he pressed on a few years in a joyous course of religious peace, when he closed his earthly career in a most triumphant departure from the shores of time, exhorting his family not to mourn for him, but to meet him on the high fields of glory, where parting and death would never come.

Soon after I had joined the Methodists, an uncle of mine called on me, who was an old Universalist, and said, "Dan, I am very sorry to learn that you have got beside yourself." "Uncle," said I, in a tone of joy, "I thank God that I have just come to myself," and started to exhort him to seek salvation. "This place," said he, "is getting too hot for me," and he started off and never assailed me again. About this time I was informed that my old preceptor had said, that when he could see me he would soon put me off the notion of being a Methodist. Shortly after this he put up a night at my father's; I lighted him to his bed-chamber, where I asked him to be seated, and seating myself by his side, said to him: "Mr. Webster, since I left your academy I have experienced a

great and happy change ;” and then gave him a short account of my conversion, and the great comfort and peace I had since enjoyed. “ Mr. Young,” said he, “ I am very happy to hear you speak thus ; I had heard that you had become wild and fanatical, but your views and feelings are all correct ; and I most sincerely advise you to pursue on in the same course, and deeply regret that I am not in the same happy state and enjoyment.” I mention these things particularly for the benefit of those who have just engaged in the cause of Christ ; and for all who are inclined to pursue a vacillating course, and quail before the enemies of the cross, we should rather say,

“ Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb,
And shall I fear to own his cause,
Or blush to speak his name ?”

We should not only be bold to confess Christ before a gainsaying world, but we should carry the war into the enemy’s camp. “ Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him,” is a precept stamped with the signet of Jehovah.

I was once traveling on a steamboat, and noticed a man of genteel appearance taking his drams fre-

quently. I spoke to him on the subject, and represented the certain and awful ruin which awaited him if he continued that habit. Several years afterward I saw him, and had the pleasure to hear him say that from the time I spoke to him he quit drinking, and had become happily converted to God, and was then publishing a paper of extensive circulation, trying to wield an influence in religion and temperance. Bishop Coke says that "the Methodists have always been complained of for reproving sin, and God forbid that we should ever lose the glory of the cross." Simpson says that "the stupid world but little think what a compliment they do the Methodists when, on all occasions of their being reproved for sin, they cry out, 'You are a Methodist.'"

A general source of irreligion is procrastination. Hence it is of the utmost importance that we should constantly impress upon the minds of the people this great truth: 'Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.' A preacher having much of the holy unction, adopted as his text these emphatic words: "Choose you this day whom you will serve." He pressed the subject with much force and zeal. A gentleman of wealth and talents listened with deep attention, and was strongly impressed with the sub-

ject. On arriving at home he took from his desk paper, pen, and ink, and wrote thus : “By the grace of God I will serve the Lord;” and subscribed his name to it, and handed it to his wife, whose heart God had touched; she burst into tears and subscribed her name to it, and in turn handed it to her sister, an amiable and intelligent young woman, who had also felt the force of the subject; she likewise, with gushing tears, subscribed her name to it. They all became worthy members of the Church, and are now probably in heaven. How happy it would be if hosts of hearers would follow their example!

CHAPTER VIII.

The Local Ministry — No Compensation for Services — Suggestions —
Scruples about Traveling — Labors as a Local Preacher — Necessity of
Harmony of Action — A Controversy with an old Calvinist Deacon —
Cause of Salvation — Newbury, Vermont — Methodism introduced —
Discourse on the Nature of Good Works — Sermon on Universal Redem-
ption — Election — Prosecution for Sabbath-breaking — Calvinistic
Convention — Challenge to a Debate — Last Sermon at Newbury — A
Scene at Baptism — Falling of a high Bridge — New England Camp-
meetings — An Incident — Glorious Time — An interesting Conversion
— A sensible Deist — His Conversion — A Mob dispersed — Numerous
Conversions.

I HAVE already called the reader's attention to the local ministry, and intimated its importance as one of the agencies by which our Church accomplishes her great work in the conversion of souls. No other Church possesses such a powerful ministerial self-supporting organization. If the services of a schoolmaster are wanted, they can be had only by paying him well; if the services of a lawyer are wanted, it is well understood that he must be paid a round price; if a doctor is wanted, his services are not expected without a liberal compensation. If men

are elected to the Legislature, they always take care to slip their hand into the treasury and see themselves well paid; the soldier and sailor talk loudly about their patriotism, but if they were called upon to serve their country without compensation, their patriotism would become as cool as a breeze from Iceland. If you would be silly enough to wish for hard work and poor wages by dancing at the sound of the viol, you must pay the fiddler well. If you wish for a few hours' work by a mere clodhopper, he must know what his compensation is to be. But in the United States there are more than twelve thousand local preachers in the Methodist Church, who toil hard to maintain their families, and spend a portion of their hard earnings to purchase books, to keep a horse and get extra clothing, and then spend a large amount of time to labor in the ministry, and all this in general without any compensation. But they "walk by faith, and not by sight." After all, something should be done to make the local ministry more respectable and useful; more care should be taken that none should be licensed to preach who have not the necessary qualifications. For myself, I have endeavored to be industrious as a local preacher, and perhaps the more so because I have had many scruples whether I ought

not to be in the itinerancy. These scruples were, however, allayed many years since by sending word by the presiding elder to the Conference that if my services were wanted in the itinerancy I would enter it. I received for answer that they were not wanted. As a sample of my labors as a local preacher, I have traveled on horseback fifty miles, walked four miles, preached three times, and visited the sick all in one day; and now that I am seventy-six years of age I sometimes ride twenty miles, preach twice, and lead class all in one day. In the capacity of a local preacher I have always considered it my duty to second and follow up the labors of the traveling preachers, and encourage and sustain them, and by all possible means to hold up their hands. Indeed, there is every reason in the world why this should be done, as they are more devotedly and exclusively engaged in the great work of promoting the glory of God and the salvation of souls than any other set of men in any considerable number on the earth. It is very important that the most perfect harmony of feeling and effort should always exist between the traveling and local ministry. We have the same Master, the same object, the same work, and the same reward. "Behold how good and how pleasant

it is for brethren to dwell and labor together in unity."

Since my location I have always been in the habit of incidental discussions on points of doctrine, and I have made it a particular object to keep both my opponent and myself in a good-humor, being aware that no other way to convince a man of the truth can be so successful. An old Calvinistic deacon once called on me, and expressed a wish to converse with me on some points of doctrine. I told him that I should be very happy to do it. His appearance made it quite evident that he felt entire confidence that with one or two questions he could entirely demolish a Methodist.

He inquired: "What is the cause of the final salvation of a sinner?"

My answer was: "No one thing is the entire cause of it. If," said I, "you were to ask me 'What is the cause of the growth of vegetation?' I should say that it was not the result of any one cause, but of a number of causes, such as fertility of the soil, humidity, and warmth. So salvation is not the result of any one isolated cause. God's love to man was the primitive or moving cause. 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting

life.' Secondly, The sufferings and death of Christ are the meritorious cause. 'He died, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God.' Thirdly, The preaching of the Gospel is the instrumental cause. 'It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.' Fourthly, faith in Christ is the efficient cause. 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' Fifthly, Being faithful unto death is the conditional cause. Hence Christ says: "Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee a crown of life.'" After I had finished my remarks he looked down thoughtfully, asked no more questions, and left with feelings I am sure very different from those with which he came.

On the Connecticut River, eight or ten miles from the place of my residence, was a flourishing village, in the state of Vermont, called Newbury. This place had always been almost entirely under the influence of Calvinism, and it appeared for a long time to be impenetrable to Methodism. From some circumstances, it happened that the pulpit of their splendid meeting-house was not supplied, and two of the principal men of the place called on me and engaged me for a time to supply it each alternate Sabbath. I considered it an object to introduce the plain doctrines

of the Gospel among them. I dwelt principally on experimental and practical religion. Those who were disposed to cavil said that my sermons were good, to be sure, but then they were just Lathrop's sermons which I had memorized ; but it happened that I had then never seen any of Lathrop's sermons. Subsequently I gave them some information respecting our usages. I gave a discourse on the nature of good works before and after conversion. I remarked that previous to conversion men may and do perform works naturally good, and such as do good, for instance, they may relieve the widow and fatherless, the poor and distressed ; they may support the institutions of religion and literature, etc. but that they could not do any works evangelically good till after conversion. That God requires us to do everything to his glory, and that he cannot in the great day reward any work which was not done from love to him and his great cause. That the objection that then the unconverted are required to do what they cannot do is fallacious, because there is no right or necessity that they should remain unconverted. ' Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.' ' Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.' "

All this is very familiar to a well instructed Methodist; but to them it was new, and did much to convince them that the hue and cry which they had been so much accustomed to hear, that Methodists held to salvation by works, was altogether false.

I also gave them a discourse on universal redemption, and after establishing this glorious doctrine by the testimony of the prophets, and that of the angels who brought the news of the Saviour's birth to the shepherds, I referred to the experience of all Christians as a confirmatory evidence of its truth, and affirmed that whenever the soul is changed from nature to grace, and the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, corresponding love to all mankind is also fixed in the heart, producing a strong desire for the salvation of all mankind. Now is it to be credited that God will produce in us a love more extensive than his own?

I also gave a discourse on election, in which I explained what Mr. Fletcher calls "the unconditional election of grace," by which some nations, families, and individuals are elected to particular benefits and privileges from which others are rejected, as the Jews rather than any other nation, and the tribe of Judah, in which the Messiah should come, and

Jacob rather than Esau, who inherit the birthright, etc.; and then what Mr. Fletcher well called the conditional election of justice, by which persons are elected to eternal life when they repent and believe on the son of God. Thus St. Paul says: "We are chosen [that is, elected] through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." This election to eternal life does not of course take place until we are sanctified by the Spirit and believe the truth, and is suspended on that condition. Finally, those who arrogate to themselves exclusively the title of orthodox, because they believe that God is the cause of those acts which are sin, are very far from being sound in doctrine.

They became alarmed at this kind of preaching, it being doubtless more than they asked for, and hit on stratagems to put down my influence; the first was to have me prosecuted for breaking the Sabbath. I had a large family to maintain, and in general received nothing for my labors in the Gospel, and could not well spend the time to go to Newbury on Saturday, and therefore rode there on Sabbath morning. The orthodox gentry, as they considered themselves, held a caucus on Sabbath to consult on measures to bring suit against me, and it was

resolved that I must be prosecuted for riding **on** Sabbath morning to my appointment to preach the Gospel. They then appointed a man to conduct the prosecution. Of all these measures I was kept advised, and I sent word to the man to whom was assigned the high honor of prosecuting me that he need not give himself the trouble of watching for me, but if he wished I would call and let him know when I passed. But I was deprived of some amusement which I was rather desirous of having, by the action of a subsequent caucus, which on a second sober-thought resolved, to my no small disappointment, that it was inexpedient to prosecute me for going to preach the Gospel on the Sabbath.

Another expedient was then resorted to. A large convention of Calvinistic clergymen was to be held in the vicinity. At the time appointed two very intelligent and reputable gentlemen called on and informed me that the leading men of that convention had desired them to call and inform me that I was requested to meet that convention, and go into a public discussion on points of doctrine. When they had delivered their message I smiled, and said to them: "All this is a stratagem to check my influence at Newbury; they presume that as they

will have all the learning and talent of the country on the side of Calvinism, and as I should be alone against them, that I will decline accepting the challenge, and that they will make capital out of that circumstance; but I will disappoint them; I will attend the convention; but mark what I say to you: they will not go into the discussion."

"What!" said they, "do you mean to be understood that they will back out after they have made the challenge?"

"Yes, I mean so to be understood."

"Impossible!" exclaimed they.

"If," said I, "those men were less learned, they might go into a debate on the subject; but they know too much ever to suffer the absurdities of Calvinism to be exposed in a debate before the public; besides, the professor of divinity and the professor of languages of Dartmouth College had a debate with me when I was studying the Hebrew language, which they would have been very sorry should have been before the public."

"Well, well," said they, "don't rely on the presumption that they will not debate, but be prepared."

"I am always prepared to meet Calvinism."

"Very good," said they; "we will call on the

morning of the day and take you to the convention. Good-by."

The intelligence was noised abroad that there was to be a controversy, and much interest was felt to hear the debate. On the morning agreed upon my friends called.

"Well," said they, "we have learned that you will have it hot and heavy."

"Very good; that will please me; but let me tell you again, there will be no debate. Be assured those men know too much to suffer Calvinism, with its horrible decree of reprobation, to be exposed in a debate before the public. As they are the challengers it will be their business of course to call me out."

"Never fear," said they; "you will find yourself called out, and no mistake."

"Very well," said I, "nothing can please me better. Mrs. Young, have a good supper prepared for our friends, for they will come back disappointed and hungry."

We went to the convention; the house was crowded; I took my seat in a conspicuous place, and remained there till the day drew near the close; but no intimation was given, nor the slightest hint

thrown out in regard to a debate. My friends, wearied with delay, proposed that we should return, which was accordingly done.

We enjoyed our good supper and evening interview with a fine zest, and next morning after breakfast my good friends took their leave, fully satisfied of the indefensibleness of Calvinism, remarking that the whole circumstances taken together would bring Newbury erect, and the result proved that they did not reckon without their host. When on the following Sabbath I went to Newbury to preach, the assembly was unusually large and attentive, and all my old friends met me with a triumphant smile. I have been the more particular in narrating these circumstances, because I have no doubt but they were the entering wedge to Newbury becoming the seat of Methodism, and the location of that very important seminary established there under the patronage of the Methodist Church. A short time before I left New England I preached on the Sabbath, in the westerly part of Newbury, to an audience of near one thousand. After preaching I baptized twenty persons by immersion in a stream near by, which in the waste of ages had made a deep cut in the earth. Close by where I baptized was a high

bridge over the stream, and some three hundred persons were on and under the bridge while I was performing the rite of baptism. I stopped repeatedly, and requested them to leave the bridge, as I thought there was danger of its falling. This they would do, but others would immediately gather on. A gracious providence, it would seem, prevented it from falling, for about thirty minutes after they had left it; and then, when all was still and quiet, it fell with a great crash.

I attended a number of camp-meetings in New England, all of which were more or less seasons of divine power and grace. One great reason why these meetings are attended with such happy results is that those who go to them for the most part arrange their business and worldly concerns to leave them for some days in succession, and give their attention to devotional exercises and feelings. I have noticed in myself, that one day after another my religious enjoyment in those meetings has become higher and higher, till I would almost seem to have a look into paradise; and when the meeting has closed, I have felt a reluctance to going again into the drudgery of worldly cares, and have rather wished that I could find Jacob's ladder.

A short time before I left New England a camp-meeting was held about thirty miles from the place where I lived. I made arrangements to go to it with my family. My wife had a young woman living with her who had been raised in a way which gave her terrible notions about the Methodists, but since she had lived with us she had become awakened, and was very desirous of fleeing the wrath to come, and of laying hold of eternal life. We asked her to go with us to the camp-meeting, but she said she feared that she would see somebody fall, and that it might have a bad effect on her mind. I told her to go, and mind nothing about what others did, but earnestly pray to God to convert her soul. The meeting soon became interesting and glorious, and this young woman was the first one on the ground who fell, and she remained in deep agony till Jesus spoke peace to her troubled mind, and she was then unmistakably full of glory and of God, and became a right shouting Methodist. The meeting was one of great power and grace. Many were smitten to the ground, and multitudes were brought to taste that God was gracious, and to witness the power of Christ to forgive sins. Triumphant shouts of the redeemed, and the loud wail of mourners in mingled sounds, made a noise that could

be heard afar off. I saw on the ground, mingling with the throng, a gentleman and his wife who had been raised in high life, and who had never been in a condition to know much about the Methodists. I felt a deep interest for their salvation, and went to them and conversed with them a short time on the subject of religion generally, and the state of the work there in particular. I was happy to find that their minds were tender, and they in a condition to be benefited by religious instruction ; and although I could hardly hope for success, I ventured to ask them to go to the mourners' bench, where there was a large group of mourners being instructed and prayed for. To my great joy they made no objection, but went right forward, where, after a lapse of time of deep mourning, and the benefit of instruction and prayers, they both became happily converted, joined the Methodist Church, became very worthy and excellent members, and I have no doubt but they are now in the kingdom of glory, or joyfully on their way there.

I noticed also in the assembly a gentleman, by the name of Morrison, who was one of the most sensible and candid deists that I ever saw. I had on former occasions conversed much with him, and had great hope that I should succeed in my efforts to have him

brought into the enjoyment of religion. I feared that seeing and hearing so much of what the wicked and formalists call confusion, he might take a wrong view of it and have his mind roused. I therefore went and sat down by him and said, "Mr. Morrison, perhaps it seems strange to you to see so much excitement, and hear so much noise," and was about to proceed to show him why it was proper. But he interfered and said: "Mr Young, you mistake my views; I have never before seen Christianity appear so rational and correct; the apathy of Christians made me a deist; it has always seemed to me that if Christians really believe what they profess, they would feel and act as they do here." "Very well," said I, "your view of the matter is undoubtedly correct; I hope you will become correct every way." "Indeed," said he, "if I am not so I hope I shall become so." Soon after this he became a converted Christian and a good Methodist.

At this camp-meeting I had been off the ground a short time, and as I returned I saw that everything was in a state of agitation. I asked the presiding elder the cause, and he pointed me to a club of men who were rapidly advancing toward the preacher's stand. "They have become offended," said he, "at

what a preacher said, which they took in high dudgeon, and are coming to break up the meeting." I instantly left the elder, and moved quickly toward them, took their leader by the hand, and whispered to him in terms of kindness. They instantly stopped, and he said to me: "Mr. Young, we have been insulted, and had determined to take satisfaction, but, nevertheless, we will do anything that you say." "Very good," said I; "you and your friends please to be seated here," pointing them to a convenient seat, "and I will go and have a man put up to preach who is an excellent man and a splendid speaker. I know you will be pleased with him, and I will do myself the honor to return here and sit with you;" all of which was done, and we had no more trouble. At this meeting the awakenings and conversions were very numerous, and the accessions to the Methodist Church were great. The parting scene with a great many of my old friends, whom I never expected to meet again on the shores of time, was very affecting; and the gush of grief was only checked by the joyful hope that we would meet again on the other side of Jordan.

CHAPTER IX.

Newbury—Salvation by Works—Sermon—An Incident—Remarkable Answers to Prayer—Talents taken away—John Collins—His Success as a Minister in the West—Character of Deism—Request to preach on a particular Text—The Sermon—Journey to the West—Search for stolen Goods—Profane Swearing—Child lost—An amusing Incident—Society in Southern Ohio—A great Camp-meeting—A Band of Miscreants—Hog Thieves—Condition of the Catholics—The Priest and Boy—A Priest outwitted.

I HAVE before given an account of my labors in Newbury, Vermont, where there has since been a Methodist theological school established, and which has, I believe, been removed to Concord, the political capital of New Hampshire. I found that the great clamor against the Methodists was, that they held to salvation by works. To put this matter right, I preached a sermon on the nature and effect of good works before and after conversion. This had a great influence in putting the matter right, and satisfying the people.

I will here give a synopsis of the sermon, because the subject is too imperfectly understood. Good

works before conversion are often productive of much benefit. They relieve the poor. There is more suffering from poverty than is generally apprehended ; it is a common circumstance for pride and ambition to conceal from the public eye the extent of poverty which is endured. And where relief is extended by a kind and delicate hand, so as not to mortify the sensitive feelings of those who are benefited, it is to them like an angel of mercy ; this is especially the case where widows, the fatherless, and orphans are the subjects of benevolence.

Again, the good works of unconverted but benevolent persons may contribute much to the interest of religion and literature. Those who are not religious often contribute largely for erecting houses of worship, and supporting preachers of the Gospel. Wealthy and benevolent persons of this description sometimes take the principal burden of these things on themselves, and also often take on themselves the burden of sustaining the great interests of literature. These things are very beneficial to the Church and the public.

Besides, the good works of unconverted persons contribute to their own enjoyment ; a consciousness of having relieved the distressed, and contributed to

the enjoyment of others, will always afford consolation. Mr. Wesley says: "I once asked a man what circumstance of his life had given him the greatest enjoyment. After a little pause, he said: 'When I was once marching an army through, on a hot day, I stopped at a cottage of a poor widow and asked for a drink of water. She gave me a drink of milk, and I gave her a piece of money, and the joy which she manifested on receiving it made me feel happier than any other event of my life.'"

And finally, the unconverted may pursue a course which, by the grace of God, may have an influence favorable to their own conversion. It will be admitted that St. Paul was not converted till the scales fell from his eyes, but in following the directions which were given him he was in a course which led to that happy result. There can be no doubt that going to the house of God, and hearing the Gospel preached in the demonstration of the Spirit and power, will be more likely to be attended with a happy result than going to a theater or ball. The prospects of conversion are certainly better in reading the Holy Bible than in reading novels. Indeed, if unconverted persons can do nothing which tends to conversion, the mourners' bench, the anxious seat, and every-

thing of that kind, is no more than a solemn farce. And the direction of the prophet: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near," would be senseless.

Thus we see that good works before conversion may be profitable to men, and may have their use; but no reliance can be placed on them for salvation or for justification. They cannot partake of the moral quality which can make them pleasing and acceptable to God, or which can make them rewardable as works done for his glory. God requires us to do all that we do to glorify him; but this we shall never do until we love him, and we never love him before we are converted.

Thus the moral qualities of our works before conversion cannot be pleasing and acceptable to God, nor can they be rewardable in the day of judgment. Without faith it is impossible to please God. The motive of action which God requires is wanting. God may be pleased with the result of acts, when he cannot be pleased with the moral quality of the motive which produces them. For example: a man of wealth and generosity, yet unconverted, may, from a desire to acquire fame, give a large amount for the missionary cause; this may become the

means of the conversion of many heathen. Now it is clear that in this case God will be pleased with the result of the donation, though he cannot be pleased with the moral quality of the motive which induced it.

Let us now consider the nature of good works after conversion; and that we may the better understand it, let us recollect that conversion is a great and radical change. It is a new birth, a new creation, created anew in Christ Jesus, passing from death to life, from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; in which all old things are done away, and all things become new, and the heart, which before was at enmity with God, is now filled with his love. It is proper that we should well consider the nature of conversion, that we may the better understand why it should make such a total change in the quality of our works. There is an entire change in the motive: the motive of works before conversion may be entirely concealed from others, and perhaps even from ourselves; it is always selfish in some way or manner; the unconverted never say, "I will bear this cross, I will endure this self-denial, I will make this sacrifice, because it will please God, and he will be glorified by it;" but with

the converted this is the motive of action, and their acts spring from the faith by which they are justified and adopted into the family of heaven. Hence their works are pleasing and acceptable to God, and as such he will reward them. Even the giving of a cup of cold water, in the name of a disciple, from pure religious motives, shall not lose its reward. Hence it is that where mortal wisdom can see no special difference in the acts and characters of men, in the eye of God, who scans the motive, the difference may be all but infinite. And this shows that the moral condition of religious and irreligious men does not trim as close as the world imagines.

From what has been said we may learn that man, while unconverted, is in a deep state of moral indifference, not being actuated by his obligations to God. And how deplorable is his situation! that his course of life is leading him to destruction, by a wrong motive of action, when the very same course might lead him on to life and glory if the love of God was shed abroad in his heart, by which the motive and moral quality of his works would be totally changed.

We learn also that to trust in morality without grace for salvation is a fatal delusion.

Again, we learn that to remain in an unconverted state is awfully dangerous.

Finally, we learn that the sentiment of our Church, namely, that man is justified by faith only, without the deeds of the law, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

I cannot close my remarks without pressing upon the consideration of the unconverted a few thoughts in relation to your condition. Think then that you voluntarily remain in a state of enmity to God, in which state, it is impossible for you to render any acceptable service to him, or lay up any treasure in the kingdom of heaven. It is impossible for you to be happy here or hereafter. As the learned Dr. Coke has said, you must have two hells, a hell of guilt and wretchedness here to move on in to an eternal hell hereafter; be miserable on earth that you may be miserable forever. Whereas, by repenting of your sins, believing in Christ, and loving your adorable God and Saviour, in other words, by being converted, you will here go on your way rejoicing, be happy in the consciousness that you please God, and happy in the hope of immortality and glory, amid the host of adoring angels, and the transported throng of the redeemed around the throne.

I recollect a circumstance which very deeply impressed my mind with a sense of the folly of sinners, and the cheerfulness with which we should perform our religious duties. When I lived on Connecticut River, I had an appointment to preach on the Sabbath about ten miles from home, and a rough, hilly road. It was in the winter season; during the week preceding there had been a thaw. On Saturday the wind turned to the north, and it became very cold, the mercury going about down to zero. The uneven surface of the ground was covered with a hard, slippery coating of ice, which made traveling over it both difficult and dangerous. The north wind blew severely and was piercingly cold. I suffered much, and was in great danger of freezing, and when I got to thinking of my sufferings my feet had well nigh slipped. I fell into a train of reflection thus: Why is it made my duty to take upon myself these severe sufferings? I shall of course receive no compensation in this world for these toils and sufferings; the people for whose salvation I labor may perhaps be more likely to curse me for telling them the truth than thank me for my labor to save their souls.

Amid these thoughts, I saw on the ice before me a pocket-book. I got down and picked it up, and

carried it on to the first house, and asked the man if he knew whose it was; he named the man to whom it belonged, and said that he had been at the tavern, where, of course, vice usually prevailed; had got drunk, had come home late in the night, fallen down on the ice and hurt himself badly, and lost his pocket-book. I requested him to return it to its owner, and pressed on to my appointment with a new train of reflections, thus: Ought I not to be ashamed of myself? I was repining with the thoughts that my condition was hard; but how pleasant in comparison with that of the poor son of Belial who lost the pocket-book. He was drunk, and I am sober; he was in the dark, I have daylight; he was in great danger of losing his life, I am in but little; he got badly hurt, I have not been hurt at all; he was serving the devil, I am serving a gracious Master, whose yoke is easy, and his burden is light; he was in the way to hell, by the grace of God I am in the way to heaven. I will just add that where I went I had a sweet time, illustrating the great truth, that "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies; and all the things

thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.” I found some warm-hearted Methodists, and also some sinners who seemed inclined to inquire the way to Zion’s gates.

In reflecting on the foregoing incident, how forcibly is the mind impressed with this fact: that sinners have far greater trials and sufferings in the way to destruction, than the children of God in the way to paradise. How will the recollection of this sink them in perdition! and how should it inspire us with more zeal and fervor in the pursuit of eternal life!

Dr. Young says that the seeds of wisdom are sown in the furrows of sorrow. I have known many instances of persons being brought to the saving knowledge of the truth by great afflictions, one of which I will relate. I was acquainted with a distinguished lawyer who became a very pious and active member of our Church. He told me that he was formerly a confirmed and active deist; that he had a lovely little son who was the idol of his heart; that his son died and left him in great distress, which was much increased by the gloomy thought that he would never again see him; and this led him to investigate the evidence of the immortality of the soul and the truth of Christianity. The result was a full conviction

that the soul was immortal, and Christianity unmistakably true. That he then, in deep earnest, sought, and to his great joy obtained the consolation of divine grace. Like David, he felt that it was good that he had been afflicted, as he had thereby learned to keep God's word.

I have known many instances of remarkable answers to prayer, one of which I will here state. A very intelligent and pious gentleman stated to me, that in the neighborhood of his residence was one who had formerly been a man of standing and worth in society, but had become the unhappy victim of intemperance. Many unsuccessful efforts had been made to reclaim him. At length he and two other gentlemen, who were devoutly pious, entered into an agreement that at a certain hour of each day, wherever they might happen to be, they would retire for secret prayer, and fervently pray to God to interpose his power and grace to redeem that victim of intemperance from his ruined condition. The wife of the inebriate presently saw an appearance of a change coming over him, and with great joy she saw him come home at evening; and this joy was increased when he said to her: "I know not what is the matter with me; I feel strangely, and I am certain that I

shall never drink any more intoxicating liquor ; I can hardly bear to think of it." No person knew anything of what was going on but the three praying men. The man has never drank any since. If the Church become sufficiently holy, there may yet be a new and more successful way of reviving the temperance cause, by wrestling with God in mighty prayer.

I have long been of the opinion that God sometimes chastises his children for disobedience without withdrawing his loving-kindness utterly from them.

A distinguished and eloquent preacher of the Gospel related to me an incident which illustrates this. It has, I believe, never been published, and yet it seems to me to be quite worthy of publication. He said that he once put up with a worthy old Methodist, who was a very stuttering man, by the name of Clark, who said to him: "I formerly lived in the state of New Jersey, where I was a class-leader. I was sure that God called me to preach the Gospel. I made various excuses, and did not obey the call. At length I distinctly heard, or seemed to hear, a voice saying to me: 'Will you preach the Gospel?' I answered: 'I will not.' The question was repeated, to which I gave the same answer; and again it was repeated with the same result. 'I will then take the

talent from you and will give it to a young man in your class.' Up to that time I could speak as fluently and distinctly as any man. I instantly lost the power of speech, and have never since been able to speak only as you now hear me, (which was very stuttering;) and a young man in my class, by the name of Collins, immediately felt called to preach, entered upon the work, and has been one of the most useful of all our preachers."

Collins soon came to the West, and was one of the most distinguished and successful of all the pioneer preachers of the great West. He seemed to possess a very special talent to obtain access to men of distinction in learning and influence. He took into the Church Governor Trimble, Judge McLean, and many others of distinction in talents and influence. On one occasion he found a wealthy Methodist erecting a distillery. He undertook, as was his duty, to dissuade him from it, but with no apparent success. He then said: "Brother, you know that we should pray to God for direction and success in every thing. Now, brother, go into your closet, and there solemnly bow before God and say: 'O Lord God, I am about to erect a distillery; do thou give me success in it, and enable me to make whisky enough to destroy a

great many souls, for whom Christ died.'” This had its effect ; the distillery went by the board.

There is no uniformity in deism, but a disbelief in the immortality of the soul lies at the foundation of it. Hence, when the French nation sunk into infidelity their favorite sing-song was that death is an eternal sleep. And to this idol of darkness and vice millions of human beings were sacrificed, and its profane altar was drenched with rivers of blood.

In New England I preached for some time in a neighborhood where it had been very fashionable for men to vaunt their skepticism, and the leading unbeliever wished me to preach on this text : “ Who knoweth that the spirit of a man goeth upward, and the spirit of a beast goeth downward.” Eccl. iii, 21. The substance of my discourse was as follows: I have taken this text by request of a gentleman, who handed it to me. It is, however, wrongly quoted, and this error seems to have been the source of an error in sentiment. As it is handed me, it would make it questionable whether there was any difference in the destiny of the spirit of a man and the spirit of a beast. But the true reading is : “ Who knoweth the spirit of man, that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast, that goeth downward.” Here then it will be seen, that

instead of making it questionable whether there is any difference between the destiny of the spirit of a man and that of a beast, it is in fact a virtual declaration that there is a difference ; and the text is reduced to a simple question as to our knowledge of the spirit of a man and that of a beast. And who is not aware that it is very difficult to know the mysterious nature of a spirit? It is after all probable that the term know, as here used, means to consider ; and that the true meaning of Solomon was thus : Among all the devotees of luxury and votaries of pleasure and folly who knows, that is, who considers, that the spirit or soul of a man goes upward to God, and that of a beast goes downward to the earth. The thoughtless crowd, who are desirous only of living voluptuously, like beasts, never seem to consider that the destiny of man is different from that of the beast.

But many have very erroneously imagined that this text favors the heart-chilling and gloomy sentiment that man has no immortal nature, but will die like the beast. Without stopping to consider the destiny of the beasts, in which we have but little interest, I wish to call your attention to a subject of infinite interest, that of the immortality of the soul. But I will first remark, that those who deny

the immortality of the soul, usually do it on the principle of materialism, and deny the existence of the soul. But nothing can be more certain than that man is a compound being, consisting of two parts; it is no difference what they are called, material matter and spirit, or soul and body. When we go into a view of the properties of matter, it is impossible to find cogitation, or thinking, study, forming and compounding ideas among them. Hence it is that the shrewdest skeptics find it necessary, for the sake of consistency, to deny the existence of the body as well as of the soul. It is manifest that if the existence of one part of man only is admitted, it would be less irrational to deny the existence of the body than the soul, because without the soul we never could be conscious of the existence of the body. Besides, there is no continuous identity of the body, but there is of the soul: that is, the body is constantly changing; the food you eat to-day will form a part of your body to-morrow, while a proportionate part of your body will have passed off. The learned Mr. Locke says, that in the life of sixty years there will be forty entire changes of the body. Hence you see that personal identity does not consist in the body. If you were asked in a court of justice if you were the man who

did such certain things five years ago, and you answered in the affirmative, it would be false if you spake in reference to your body. But the soul, through all revolutions and changes, continues the same; its identity never changes, and when disengaged from the body its identity will be the same forever. This sentiment was happily expressed by Socrates when his friends said to him: "What shall we do with you when you are dead?" He replied: "What you please if you can catch me." Then turning to some one present he said: "My friends imagine that they can dispose of me when I am dead, but I shall be far away in distant worlds."

And Cicero, the great Roman orator, whose eloquence was so fascinating, said: "If I should depart from this life, and, being on my way to the Elysian Fields, meet a messenger who should ask me if I would not return to this world, I should undoubtedly answer in the negative, and say, rather let me go on and dwell with all the wise and good in those happy fields, than return to the sorrows and calamities of this world." The inspired writers abound in the same happy sentiment. St. Paul represents that it would be better for him (his real self) to be absent from the body and be with Christ; and St. Peter

says: "I know that shortly I shall put off this my tabernacle." Here the apostle speaks, as do Socrates, Cicero, and St. Paul, of his soul as being his real self. This excellent sentiment is well expressed by Dr. Young, who is always so correct on these great subjects:

"This truth how certain, when man's life is o'er
He dies to live, and lives to die no more."

And again:

"Man but dives in death, and dives
To rise in brighter worlds.

The deists of course admit that there is a God, and will also admit that he is wise and good. If so, he surely would not tantalize his creatures by giving them desires which he never intended should be gratified.

Now it is clear that we have desires for happiness which cannot be satisfied from terrestrial or mere worldly sources, either in nature or degree. And let it not be said that this is a whimsical notion of religionists; the most sanguine and successful devotees of the world are good witnesses in this case. Alexander, after having conquered the world, was wretched that there was no more for him. Solomon, who had succeeded in the acquisition of everything that his heart could wish, in summing up the whole, makes the

sum total to be vanity of vanities and vexation of spirit. Cæsar in the height of his glory exclaimed, "Is this all?" Yes, Cæsar, this is all; the world has no more. Napoleon Bonaparte, whose success had made him the wonder of the world, who made kingdoms his playthings and thrones his footballs, said that his happiest days were those of his boyhood. Every true Christian can say, as we sometimes sing :

"I've sought for bliss in glittering toys,
And ranged the alluring fields of vice;
But never knew substantial joys
Until I heard my Saviour's voice."

The beasts graze in luxuriant pastures, and lie down contented; but the king upon his throne, and the poor peasant who dwells in his straw-thatched hut, are alike dissatisfied, and feel the same aching void. It is only when we feel the buoyant hope of immortality, and taste that the Lord is gracious, that we can say with the apostle, "I do rejoice and I will rejoice." It cannot possibly be that a wise and gracious God would have implanted in us such strong desires for high mental enjoyments without the possibility of their ever being gratified.

Again, the love of life is deeply fixed in our natures. This is so strong that we still hang to it, even under

circumstances of much suffering. Persons sentenced to death, and having the offer of accepting imprisonment for life instead of death, have, as far as I have known, always taken imprisonment, although it would be under circumstances of much suffering and disgrace.

Annihilation is a horrible thought, at which our whole nature shudders. But I may be told that some desire it; but such a desire is the offspring of conscious guilt. No man ever desired it until his consciousness of guilt made him prefer annihilation to meeting the retribution which his crimes justly merited. With the exception of such desperate cases, how strong is the pleasing hope, the fond desire, the longing after immortality! and how great is the "secret dread and inward horror of sinking into nothing!"

And is not this most evidently the finger of God pointing us to immortality? How transporting the thought that eternal life is the gift of God, and that by his grace, and through the great propitiatory sacrifice, we may all obtain it! Yes, in less than one century from this day, every one of us, if we will, may be seated as kings and priests on thrones of glory, at the right hand of God, in an unutterable

ecstasy of joy, and that to be perpetuated *ad infinitum*. Think of the boast of the skeptic, that he will die like the ass or the swine, in comparison with this.

But I have not done with the pleasing topic of the future prospects of the soul. The intellectual powers of man form an unanswerable argument in favor of the immortality of the soul. Man, in his scientific pursuits, analyzes almost everything in the material world; he has invented instruments by which he guides the huge ship across the tempestuous deep, and designates his line with so much exactness that he can find any given point in the vast ocean; he has invented rules by which he can calculate the motions, and all the intricate positions of the heavenly bodies with astonishing exactness, and measure the comet's swift-winged flight through the unfathomed space; he has forced into his service a mere vapor, by which he propels boats of immense burden against the strong currents of the immense rivers which are everywhere meandering through the country. Here see mountains leveled, and there oceans joined, and then say, "Have not immortals been here?"

Are these intellectual powers, scarcely less than

angelic, to be extinguished and go out in eternal darkness? If so, why not angels too become extinct, and nothing remain but a solitary God, looking down on the vast field of destruction and death, where all would be as silent as the voiceless grave.

Once more, the susceptibility of the soul for improvement furnishes unmistakable evidence that man is born to live when stars and sun shall go not out in darkness, and nature sink in years. The beasts at once arrive at their zenith. If they were to live for ages, their knowledge and enjoyment would not be augmented. But if man were to live coeval with the sun, "the patriarch pupil would be learning still;" and is he brought into existence to be smothered in the cradle, and never know anything of mature life? What pleasure would the Almighty derive by thus sporting with the imbecility of man, by first exciting and then blasting all his hopes? Can his pleasure be increased by bringing into existence highly intellectual beings, and advancing them in a state of pupilage till they become fired with a joyful hope of immortality and glory, and then suddenly blasting all their hopes, by plunging them into the dark gulf of annihilation? O ye skeptics, if such is your god, we who worship the God

of the Bible, and enjoy the sweet hope of eternal life, cannot say to you, "Let your god be our God." No, no; we would sooner go back to the worship of Moloch.

There is another process by which the immortality of the soul could be made perfectly demonstrable; namely, by first proving the truth of the Holy Scriptures, which could easily be done beyond all reasonable doubt, and then showing that this is a prominent feature in those sacred writings. But lest skeptics should say that 'I have relied upon authority which they do not admit, I have preferred drawing my arguments from other sources. I wish now, in closing this discourse, to make a few words of address to those who are skeptical in relation to the immortality of the soul. I wish to say to you, there is nothing in your case or your sentiments which excites in me any unfriendly or any unkind feeling; on the other hand, there is nothing in my power but what I would gladly do to contribute to your present and eternal happiness. Let me then entreat you, if you think freely, to think closely also; and by this course I have no doubt but that you will see and feel that the evidence of the immortality of the soul is not only strong, but overwhelming; and how joyful will be the

haleyon hour when you shall realize that you are born for immortality, and that that may be a state of infinite bliss, through the great atonement effected by the Son of God, in dying to save a guilty world. But if you are in league with death, and will not yourself accept of eternal life, do not be so cruel as even to try to destroy in others the hope of life and glory, which is worth far more than the whole world. If your heart is so steeped in the malignant pool of infidelity that you can feel a pleasure in drying up the sources of joy and opening the sluices of despair and woe, take from the widow and her fatherless children the last morsel of bread on which they had hoped to subsist, and snatch from the drowning man the last plank on which he had hoped to escape a watery grave; but never attempt to wrest from the Christian his only exuberant source of consolation, by striving to destroy his bright prospect of rejoining his departed friends in heaven.

In making my final start for the West, it was quite affecting to take my last view of the mountains, the hills, the forests, the rivers, the verdant fields, and all the variegated scenery where I had my birth, and spent so great a portion of my life, and which I

never expected to see again. Besides myself and family, there were three other families in company, all of whom were good Methodists. The journey was tedious, but we spent a number of Sabbaths in religious worship, with much delight and pleasure, with pious friends whom we found on the way. At Olean Point, where we had to stop a few days to have some boats finished to come down the river, a humorous occurrence happened, which showed what a comfortable thing a clear conscience is. I hired a room, into which I hastily put my things from my hack and baggage wagon. Just as I had got all in, together with my family, everything being in a chaotic state, an officer with three men came in and informed me that he had a warrant to search for some stolen goods. I instantly closed the door, and told my family none of them must go out till this business was through. They were much alarmed to think that they were suspected of being thieves; but I told them not to be alarmed, that no harm would be done us, that we were strangers, and as liable to be suspected as anybody else. By this time the officer began to make some apologies for coming to search our boxes. I told him that no apologies were necessary; that we were entire strangers, and as

liable to be suspected as anybody else ; that I wished him to commence his work, and that every chest and trunk should be opened for him. I told him that I wished him to be thorough in the search, to make it certain whether we had the things or not. But when he was about half through, he stopped and said, "I will search no farther." I said to him, "You must ; it is my right to have the search thorough." "But," he replied, "I know you haven't got the things, and I won't search any more."

The next morning, when I walked through the village, I was much annoyed with horridly profane language from every quarter, but I soon broke on them in terms of rebuke of no very soft nature. I told them that I had traveled much, had seen most of the United States and the British dominions, but never before at any place where I had been had I heard such language, except from the free negroes in Boston, who swore very much like them. They gazed at me, but did not seem to think themselves very highly complimented, and I ceased to be annoyed with their wretched profanity.

At Pittsburgh, where we stopped a day and a night, a little daughter wandered away from us and was lost in the city ; it was several hours before we

found her, and they were hours of deep suspense and anxiety.

The second night that we were on the Ohio River we landed our boats a little after sunset, and tied them up with our lines. After supper we took our lodgings as usual, and in the embraces of sleep fell into a sweet forgetfulness of the dangers and the toils of the day. All of a sudden, about midnight, we were waked up by a tremendous storm, which made a great noise, and immediately our boats commenced rocking and tossing on the waves. We sprang from our sleep, and fearful that our boats would be torn from their moorings by the violence of the storm, we ran out; but although the agitation of the water indicated a violent storm, yet the night was cloudless, serene, and calm. We were much perplexed to know what it could mean, but were very glad our lines had not parted. In the morning we found a man on the bank, of whom we inquired what it could mean. He smiled, and said: "A steamboat passed, which produced the noise you heard, and the waves which rocked your boats with so much violence were made by the steamer's paddles." We were much amused at the idea of such an effect from a passing steamboat. When I arrived in the south

part of Ohio, I found the state of society very rude, and not a little vicious. I applied myself by all the means that I could use to effect a reformation, not only religiously, but socially, and I found the work more practicable than I expected. The people seemed inclined to be instructed, and were easily convinced that they ought to be in a better way. Besides the usual course of preaching the Gospel, I had, with such other help as I could obtain, a great many protracted meetings. At these meetings some ten, fifteen, and sometimes twenty or more would join our societies. I soon found that there was no such systematic opposition to Methodism here as we had to contend with in New England. Our meetings were often attended with much ecstasy and joy, and happy conversions. I have attended many camp-meetings here, which have been scenes of glorious displays of God's power. They have truly been times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. I attended one camp-meeting where more than one hundred joined the Church, most of whom were happily converted. The old camp-ground at Rome, of happy memory to many precious souls, is extensively known to our Western friends. What multitudes have there been awakened and brought

home to God! O how many redeemed souls in heaven will remember that old camp-ground and grove as the place in which they were born again!

It may be of some use here to state a method of managing clubs of wild fellows, who go to these meetings to disturb them. I have already mentioned a circumstance of the way in which I managed a violent club at a camp-meeting in New England. Where I attended a camp-meeting, a band of these miscreants came to break up the meeting. A council of advisement was held in the preachers' tent. The general voice was: "Establish a court on the ground, have the civil officers at hand, and enforce the law in its utmost rigor." I said to them: "It seems to me there is a better way. If you take that course it will thwart the object of the meeting, by diverting the attention of the people from the exercises of devotion." "Well," said they, "but what can you do?" "If you will accept of me I will become bondsman for them that they will give you no trouble, provided, however, that you let them entirely alone, and don't threaten them." "Well," said they, "we will take you as bondsman, leave them entirely to your management, and wish you good success." "O!" said I, "give yourselves no

trouble about that; my task will be easy, and the result sure;" and I was soon mingling in company with those wild fellows. I informed them of all that had passed, and added: "I know that you have too much honor to bring a bondsman into trouble." "Certainly we have," said they; "we will do anything, Mr. Young, that you will say." "I was sure of that; but there might be some others who might trouble the meeting, and I want you to serve us as guards to keep all others in good order." "To be sure we will," said they, with one voice. So I placed them as sentinels round the camp-ground to preserve order, and never were sentinels more faithful. At another meeting I took much the same course with the same success.

Camp-meetings have been a source of great good; but I have fears that the introduction of luxury, as the keeping of sumptuous tables, will in some measure destroy their usefulness. Persons should go to these meetings to feast their souls and not their bodies. In one case I preserved order in a protracted meeting by a little humor. I had made an appointment for a two days' meeting in a good neighborhood, but contiguous to what was called the backwoods. On Saturday evening our friends

told me that our meeting on the Sabbath would be disturbed. I asked them, Why so? They said that there lived out back some very wild, wicked fellows, who always disturbed their big meetings on the Sabbath. I told them to give themselves no trouble, I was sure we should have no disturbance; but they were still confident that we should. I had learned that there had recently been some hogs stolen in the neighborhood. On Sabbath morning, when about to commence service, I related what the friends had told me about the meetings in that place being disturbed, and said that I was sure we should have no disturbance, unless the hog-thieves were there; that I should not be surprised if persons who were mean enough to steal hogs would even disturb religious worship, but I was sure nobody else would. We had a very quiet and joyful time; of course no disturbance, and our friends were much pleased. And now, in all candor, I will say that the stealing of hogs and disturbing religious worship are about equally mean and contemptible; the latter, however, is the most awful sin against God.

It has long appeared to me that it is a question of serious importance, Cannot something be done for the benefit of the Roman Catholics? We are sending

missionaries to various parts of the world to instruct the heathen, and this, to be sure, is all right, and the effort of doing this should be much increased; but let us not in pursuing one duty lose sight of another. Here are thousands immediately among us in a more hopeless condition than the heathen. And what are we doing for them? They know almost nothing of the Bible, nothing of religious experience and holy joy, and are even sunk in the idolatrous course of worshipping angels, saints, and relics. Not long since some Romanists asked me if I prayed to the Virgin Mary, and when I told them that I did not they seemed to be shocked. I said to them: "I am a Bible Christian, and follow the instructions of that holy book, and that directs me to pray to God and nothing else." But they appeared to know no more of the Bible than of the Koran.

One of our distinguished preachers recently told me that he had a conversation with a Romish priest about their praying to the Virgin Mary, and said to him that he knew of course that Mary was local in her existence. "And what hope can you have that she will hear you?" "We think," said he, "that an angel may be passing by who may hear us, and will go and tell Mary, and she will tell her son, and

he will tell the Father." Is not this a round about way of praying.

A Romish priest once said to a boy: "Joe, you must pay me a shilling to have me pardon your sins."

"Who pardons your sins?" said the boy.

"The bishop."

"And do you pay him for it?"

"To be sure I do."

"Well, who pardons the bishop's sins?"

"The pope."

"And does he pay the pope for it?"

"Of course he does."

"Well, then, who pardons the pope's sins?"

"O, God pardons his."

"And does he pay God for it?"

"O no! God don't ask anything."

"Then," said the boy, "God is best, and I will go to him to get my sins pardoned?" Now is it not very strange that this deluded people have not sense enough to reason in the same way?

A very pious and intelligent gentleman, from Baltimore, gave me an interesting account of a young man who belonged to the Catholic Church a little out of the city, and also of a young woman of the same

place who belonged to the Methodists. This young man and woman became attached to each other, and were desirous of becoming united in marriage, but then the difference in their religion stood in the way ; but they nevertheless finally agreed that they would unite their hands in sacred wedlock, and that they should severally pursue their own religious course, the other neither objecting to it nor questioning about it. In this way they got along well for a while, but at length the wife discovered that her husband became melancholy. She asked him the cause, but he declined telling her. Finally she said to him : “ My dear, you must tell me the cause of your being melancholy. It makes us both unhappy, and I cannot be put off any longer about it.” He replied : “ I cannot tell you ; it would violate an agreement which we solemnly made between us.” “ I will then,” she replied, “ for this time release you from your obligation.” “ Then,” said he, “ the cause of my melancholy is this : You are a good wife to me, and as such I love you ; but you are a heretic, and I know you will go to hell, and I cannot help feeling bad about it.” “ O my dear,” said she with great sweetness of temper, “ don’t trouble yourself about that. I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and I love him with

all my heart, and he will surely save me." "O yes, you think so, and that makes it worse, for all heretics will go to hell; there can be no salvation out of the Catholic Church." Seeing that nothing could be done in this way, she said: "Well, if I am wrong I want to know it. You go to the city and get your priest to come here, and perhaps he may convince me that I am wrong, and if so I will join the Catholic Church." At this he felt a glow of satisfaction and triumph, and went immediately for the priest, who, when he arrived, went on to show her that the Catholic Church was the only true one, that all others were heretics and must be lost. They were rather surprised to find her so easily brought over to the Catholic faith. It was agreed that the priest should come out on a set day and administer the sacrament to her, and take her into the Catholic Church, with this only condition, that she would prepare the wafers for the sacrament, to which there was no objection. He came out on the day appointed and consecrated the wafers, her husband looking on with great eagerness and delight that his wife was about to become a Catholic. He pleasingly looked forward through a long lapse of years, when he and his wife would go on happily together in the true Church, and their

children be raised in the true Catholic faith. But stop ; what a damper is thrown over the proceedings as she says to the priest: " These wafers are now consecrated ?" " Yes, they are now the real body of Christ." " Irrespective of what they have been, they must therefore be healthy?" " Certainly so," said the priest. " It is then proper," said she, " that I should inform you that these wafers were made principally of arsenic, with just flour enough to stick them together. Now you take one of them, and if you remain alive a few hours hence I shall be convinced that you are right, and will take the other and be a Catholic." He withdrew his hand ; she insisted that he should eat it, saying, " If the Catholics are right, there can be no danger." Her husband looked on with surprise and was confounded. The priest rose abruptly and left. Her husband was now fully convinced that the Catholic faith was all a deception. He became a Methodist, earnestly sought and obtained salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, and, with his pious, shrewd, and beloved wife, went on his way rejoicing.

CHAPTER X.

Origin of Methodism—Colleagues of Wesley—Controversies—Methodism in America—Personal of early New England Preachers—Abbott—Labors—Incidents—Mitchell—Jesse Lee—Pickering—Sabin—Taylor—Bostwick—Webb—Soule—Ruter—Bishops of Olden Time—Hedding—An Incident—James Young—Sketches of Bishop Hedding's Sermons—A Freewill Baptist—Conversion of a Sailor—Sugar-making—Dreadful Calamity—Remarkable Conversion of a Young Lady—The hospitable Man.

METHODISM had its origin under circumstances highly reputable to the numerous and flourishing religious sect known by the name and style of Methodist. It did not originate in a struggle for political or ecclesiastical power, but in a deep hungering and thirsting after righteousness, in a fixed and fervent desire for holiness of heart and life. No persecution, no blood, no uncharitable treatment of other sects has ever marked its course.

Mr. John Wesley, the father of Methodism, by his iron constitution, giant intellect, deep piety, profound erudition, and untiring industry and perseverance, was peculiarly qualified for the great work to which God called him. But when he entered upon

his work he had no idea of the results which would follow, and was perhaps more surprised in their development than anybody else, and repeatedly had almost determined on opposing them himself; and but for the controlling influence of his extraordinary mother, it seems that he would have done it, especially when laymen, converted under his ministry, began to preach the Gospel. How little did he think that God was using him as an instrument to produce the wonderful effects which have followed in Europe and America, and which are destined in their ultimate results to revolutionize the world.

When God saw that the task of leading, governing, and judging the children of Israel was too great for Moses, he made provision for him to have helps in the arduous work. So also he made provision for Mr. Wesley to have co-workers in the arduous task to which he was called. In his brother Charles he found a valuable colleague, and the more so as he was perhaps the best writer of sacred poetry who has ever lived. In Mr. Fletcher he found a helpmate altogether invaluable. As soon as Mr. Wesley published the ever memorable *Minutes* which expressed his views of the great truths of Christianity, and which were strongly anti-Calvinistic, he was attacked

in the most violent manner, in terms of unmeasured abuse, by the most learned and distinguished Calvinists in the country.

He had, to be sure, the ability to rebut their attacks, and prove, in the clearest manner, the truth of the pure doctrine which he had published in the Minutes. But he had not the time for it, without diverting his attention from the great work in which he was engaged. But God, who always makes arrangements to effect his purposes, raised up one, highly qualified by his clear intellect, deep learning, profound research, and fervent piety, to enter the field of polemic discussion, and to wield his pen for the defense of the truth against the Goliaths of Calvinism. This was that great light of the Church, John Fletcher. He entered the field against Mr. Toplady and other distinguished Calvinists. The controversy was warm, and ably conducted on both sides. It continued for several years, when Mr. Fletcher's opponents quitted the field and left him triumphant. I am sure that no one has ever read this controversy with attention without a full conviction that the triumph of truth in the hands of Mr. Fletcher was perfect. And, indeed, Calvinism has ever since been on the wane.

The writings of Mr. Fletcher on this occasion are published in two volumes, entitled, "Checks to Antinomianism." These volumes should be attentively read, by all young preachers especially.

I give here, in few words, a sample of this controversy. Mr. Toplady said: "It is a dictate of the Bible and of common sense, that whatever is is right." Mr. Fletcher first made a laconic reply thus: "It is a dictate of the Bible and common sense, that *sin* is *always* wrong." He then proceeded to show at length that the sentiment uttered by Mr. Toplady was not only false, but shocking; for if everything was right there was no occasion for Christ to come and suffer; and there is no sense in preaching repentance, as there is no reason that we should repent of doing right.

Mr. Wesley was thus left at liberty to go on in the glorious work of reform, while error was being put down, and truth coming out in all its beauty and loveliness.

Britannia's isle could not bound the zeal of Wesley and his colleagues; and the ever memorable Francis Asbury and others crossed the Atlantic and came to our favored shores, and in the New World published the glad tidings of salvation.

This work of faith and labor of love was commenced about the same time in the city of New York and in the South. New England then appeared invulnerable to such an enterprise; it was overrun with deism, Universalism, and Calvinism, which seemed to present impregnable walls to the herald of the cross. But the grace of God is sufficient to overcome all obstacles; the Methodists penetrated those regions of stony soil and stony hearts, and unfurling the blood-stained banner of the cross, boldly proclaimed free grace, free will, and free salvation, where limited grace, bound will, and restricted salvation had ever been the order of the day.

I have already given some account of the early New England Methodist preachers with whom I was acquainted; but it has occurred to me that most persons like to know something of the personal appearance, worth, and character of such men. These preachers were, on several accounts, a very extraordinary set of men; and such as, in some respects, will never be seen again.

Their zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls was so burning that no labor, no poverty, no danger, and no suffering checked them. And their self-sacrificing spirit for the good of others can

only be accounted for on the principle, which beyond all question was the true one, that God moved them to it.

Benjamin Abbott was one of the first Methodist preachers raised up in the North. I was not personally acquainted with him, but, besides what is published in his life, I learned many particulars of him from Bishop Hedding. He was probably the most illiterate man that was ever licensed to preach among the Methodists. He could barely read the Bible and Hymn Book. His case was a good illustration of the declaration of Divine truth, that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise." On a certain occasion, when exhorting before one of the bishops, among other awkward expressions he spoke of the *scatic* ocean. The bishop, in much kindness, told him that he should have called it *Atlantic* Ocean, and corrected other blunders, and requested him to try to be more accurate in his language; all of which he took in good part, and expressed much gratitude to the bishop, together with a determination to follow his counsel. But now for the sequel. The next day he was set to preach before the bishop; he resolved to have his discourse as nice as possible, but he felt

cramped and embarrassed, and saw that no interest was excited. At length he came to a pause, and exclaimed: "If all the bishops on earth, and all the devils in hell were here, I must preach like Ben Abbott." He then made a new start, and went ahead with his usual style and energy, which was followed with a great move in the assembly, and a shout of victory.

On one occasion, when he was preaching to a crowded audience, the excitement, as usual, became great. In the midst of it there suddenly came up a tremendous thunder storm. The earth seemed to rock with the crashing thunder, and the vivid lightning was truly terrific. In the midst of the storm, with a tone of voice peculiar to himself, Abbott exclaimed, as he was dwelling then on the awful subject of the coming of Christ to judgment, "He may come in the next flash of lightning." There was a general cry, "O God, be merciful to me a sinner!" and the people fell on every side.

I know it is generally thought that no such excitement can be produced among the intelligent and refined. But Voltaire says: "I was present when Massillon preached his sermon on the small number of the saved, and as he drew near the close,

the whole assembly, consisting of about one thousand, simultaneously sprang from their seats, and appeared affrighted. This assembly consisted of the first characters of France.

Abbott gives an account of a young woman, of Dutch descent, who became much awakened, and inquired what she must do to be saved. He told her to pray to God for mercy. She said that she could not pray in English. "Never mind that," said he; "pray in Dutch; the Lord understands Dutch." She did, and the Lord spoke peace to her soul.

He mentions a case where his preaching was attended with the power of the Holy Ghost; and a man in the assembly approaching him, drew from his pocket a loaded pistol, and handed it to him, saying: "When I came here I brought this, with the full determination to shoot a man who is here before I returned home; but God has shown me the error of my ways, and I now want to seek his mercy."

This early pioneer of Methodism cannot, in his erudition and style, be considered a model preacher; but it would be well if all young preachers especially would strive to imitate his holy fervor, zeal, and success in winning souls to Christ. Is there not great danger that in striving to make sermons elegant and

acceptable to the hearers, the unction may be lost?

Joseph Mitchell, with whom I spent some sweet seasons, was another of the earliest Methodist preachers. He used to labor with Lorenzo Dow. He was of moderate stature, weighing, I should judge, about one hundred and fifty pounds; about five feet and nine inches high; he had an intelligent look and was warm-hearted. As a preacher his talents were good, and he was very zealous and successful. He was remarkable for harrowing up the conscience, and making close applications. As an example: A young woman, very gaudily dressed, was passing near him; he fixed a solemn look on her, and said: "Young woman, one flash of hell-fire would burn off all of those *furbelows*."

It was very customary for him to preach on Calvinism, which he did with so much talent and pith as to make it appear honorable to those who heard him. On one occasion he went into a town where an old Calvinistic preacher was settled. He obtained a place to preach, and at the close of the service he said that he would make another appointment if he could have a place to preach. The tavern-keeper said that he might preach in his hall, and the appointment was

made ; but the good deacons became apprehensive that it would be unpopular to have a religious meeting conducted in the tavern, and the meeting-house standing idle, so it was altered to be at the meeting-house, the old parson saying that he would go and hear the heretic, and if he preached any of his heresy, he would put him down before the people.

The information of this got out, and the people generally being eager to see the heretic put down, (though some of the shrewd ones thought that the putting down would go the other way,) there was a very crowded house. Mitchell had got intelligence that he was to be put down, and itching for struggle, pitched into Calvinism with all his might. As soon as the meeting was closed the parson took his hat and started for the door, while the people, who were wondering what he could say to the clear and strong arguments of Mitchell, looked on his movement with surprise and disappointment. The deacon went to him and said : "Sir, this man has made a violent attack on our doctrine, and the people expect you to reply " "I would," said he, "as soon fall foul of a thorn-bush as that man," and prudently kept on his course.

I have before spoken of most of the early preachers,

but recollecting that they have nearly all passed away, and reflecting upon their great personal worth, and their unparalleled efforts for the prosperity of the Church, I feel impelled to contribute my feeble efforts to snatch their names, which are worthy to be recorded in golden capitals on the front of every chapel in the country, from oblivion.

I have given some account of Jesse Lee, the man who was the apostle of Methodism in New England. He was six feet in height, large and robust, and would weigh about two hundred and fifty pounds; his appearance was dignified and apostolic. This circumstance excited the respect of the members of Congress when he was chaplain of that august body. When he preached in Boston, he was so hard pressed for funds that he had to sell his books to pay his board. With what feelings of gratitude and admiration should the memory of such veterans of the cross be cherished!

George Pickering was one of the earliest preachers of New England. He was about six feet in height, very muscular, with no spare flesh, and would weigh about one hundred and sixty-five pounds. He had a sharp visage, and very keen eye; was very strong in his intellectual powers, and fervent in the cause of

his Master. He had great tact and success in defending the cause of Methodism, and his attachment to it may be seen from the following circumstance. He went into a wealthy town in Massachusetts, and preached to the great admiration of the people, who determined, if possible, to induce him to become their settled minister. They waited on him, and offered him, as they termed it, a handsome salary; and were somewhat surprised that he objected to it as not being enough, and the more so, as they knew that he had been preaching in the Methodist Church for almost nothing. They asked him what amount would be satisfactory. He replied that it would have to be very large; that God had called him to be a Methodist preacher, and he felt that he could not disobey the call without selling his soul; that the Saviour has represented that it would be a bad barter to gain the whole world at the loss of the soul; he could not therefore become their settled minister unless they could pay him a salary of more than the whole world. His firmness excited the admiration even of the enemies of the Methodists.

I cannot refrain from remarking here, that I have known a few preachers to leave the Methodists and go to other denominations with flattering worldly

prospects, but I have never known one that I had reason to believe spent his life as happily, as usefully, or as respectably as he would have done if he had rejected the lucre, and, like Moses, have chosen to suffer affliction with the people of God in preference to any worldly lucre. I have mentioned this circumstance to show the spirit of worthy Methodist preachers.

Pickering labored most in and about Boston, where, by great talents and zeal, he was very useful in advancing the interests of our Church. When I attended a conference in Boston, he opened the session by an eloquent sermon on this text: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." The *treasure* was brilliantly exhibited in all its infinite value, beauty, and excellence; but when he came to describe the *earthen vessels* he made us feel that we were as nothing; in short, that we were mere earthen vessels, and should feel ourselves highly honored that God had made us the bearers of such a treasure.

Elijah R. Sabin, of whom I have already spoken, was another pioneer preacher in New England. He was of light complexion and rather fragile form, with

a penetrating eye, and a countenance that denoted a strong intellect and warm feelings.

He had formerly been one of the shrewdest deists in the country. He often introduced arguments on deism which were a most powerful refutation of its errors, and would follow them with a vivid description of its pernicious tendency, and close by a most solemn appeal to all persons to shun its deadly poison. He was very bold and pointed in reproofing sin and folly. I recollect that while I was yet strongly opposed to the Methodists, a man by the name of Grey, who, like myself, was a great beau, agreed with me that, as we had noticed him sometimes reproofing persons for their dress, we would dress ourselves in the most gaudy style, as if we were going to a ball, and go to meeting where he was to preach, to see what we could provoke him to say to us. Accordingly we went, with powdered hair and broad ruffles, as was then the fashion, and seated ourselves near the preacher with great ostentation. But how great was our disappointment and chagrin; he penetrated our object and did not appear to notice us; and our comrades bored us about being outgeneraled by the Methodist preacher. In short, we were flat.

He wrote a good treatise on discipline, and some other small works, which were quite useful in their day. A gracious work of God usually attended his ministry. Bishop Asbury said of him: "We want such men as he is, who will push the enemy to the wall."

Joshua Taylor was one of the earliest preachers of that region. He was well educated, very sedate, extremely modest and unassuming, and when some of the clergy of what was then called the standing order made an attack on the Methodists, he wrote and published an answer to them with great ability, and also carried the war very successfully into the enemy's camp. The cause of Methodism was well sustained in his hands.

Shadrach Bostwick was another well educated, able, and successful pioneer of Methodism; and by leaving a learned and lucrative profession, and taking on himself the toils and privations of a Methodist preacher, he made a great sacrifice of worldly interest for the sake of leading lost souls in the way of life and salvation.

Thomas Branch was a man of a dark complexion and fragile form, and would weigh about one hundred and sixty pounds; he also was well educated, a

good sermonizer, and deeply pious. His course was short; he died of consumption, and went to an early and glorious reward. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Daniel Webb was about five feet and eleven inches in height, well proportioned, light complexion, a good constitution, very intelligent, and an elegant penman. He was a good preacher, very companionable, and acted his part well in the great cause of reformation.

John Brodhead was among the first Methodist preachers in New England. He was about six feet in height, large, portly, and splendid in his appearance, and would weigh near two hundred and fifty pounds. He was one of the best public speakers that I ever heard, and was indescribably talented in prayer. When he was warmed up to a high state of zeal, and engaged in public prayer, it would seem as if the windows of heaven were opened and a blessing poured out that there was not room to receive it. What shouts of joy and victory have I heard going through the assembly while he has been pouring out his whole soul in ardent prayer into the ear

of the Lord of hosts. At camp-meetings he was a host, and the more so as everybody venerated him. He was a preacher of much usefulness in the Church, as he was talented, very pious, and discreet; his influence was always great in conference. He was a man of much shrewdness. On one occasion, when he was taking passage on board of a packet ship on the coast, he heard the captain swear profanely, and, as was his duty, he reproved him. The captain replied: "Sir, you may learn from your Master that you should not cast pearls before swine." "I ask your pardon, sir," said Mr. Brodhead, promptly; "but I did not know that all seafaring men were swine; I thought that there were some gentlemen among them." The captain felt the retort deeply, and after that treated Mr. Brodhead with marked attention and politeness.

He was not as profound a logician as Sabin and some others, but he would so overwhelm an antagonist as to make him very desirous of being off. A bustling materialist made an attack on him, and said: "God is everything, and everything is God."

"Then," said Mr. Brodhead, archly, "we eat God, and drink God, and boil God, and burn God." This

raised a contemptuous laugh on the dismayed materialist, and he was glad to take French leave.

Joshua Soule was a very distinguished pioneer preacher, about six feet in height, and in his form and proportion a very perfect symmetry, light complexion, and would weigh about one hundred and ninety pounds. He was very dignified in his manner, a strong intellect, a very clear reasoner, and eloquent and favorable in his address as a public speaker, and wielded a strong influence for the benefit of the Church. On the truth of Christianity and the resurrection of the dead he was overwhelming. In debate he was very strong, and whenever the enemies of Methodism fell into his hands they were glad to make good their retreat as soon as possible.

On one occasion when he was delivering a temperance address, a man being present who had been an eminent lawyer, but who, by the use of the intoxicating cup, had become lost to his friends and to society, broke out in a vociferous manner, objecting to what Mr. Soule had said, and being then in a state of intoxication, could not be induced to be silent; and some of the lovers of order were about to take him out, when Mr. Soule said to them, "No, no! let him go

on. I think he will do more good than I can ; he gives ocular demonstration of the frightful evil of intemperance." The poor wretch paused and said : " Ah ! Mr. Soule, I see you understand the matter better than I do ; I will be silent." Mr. Soule proceeded and was no more interrupted.

I have already written at some length of Martin Ruter. View him first as the Vermont urchin, trudging over the snowy hills to the district school to learn his a, b, c, and to jabber out ba, be, bi, bo, etc., and his parents thinking he had made great proficiency when he came home and straightening up spelled out baker. Then to see his shouting mother, (for she was a right shouting Methodist,) rejoicing over her dear boy happily converted to God ; then follow him to the age of sixteen, astonishing listening crowds with his early eloquence ; then mark his progress in Belles Lettres ; without ever having the advantage of any high school, he became one of the most literary men in the country, and excited auditors in crowds hung upon his lips with admiration and delight. He long stood forth in New England as the champion of Methodism, and whenever any had the rashness to enter the field against him they always came off second best. He published some

excellent periodical works, and his more voluminous productions are always read with admiration and profit. On the whole, he was one of the most extraordinary men of his age.

I have had the pleasure of a particular acquaintance with a number of the bishops of the Methodist Church, as Asbury, Whatcoat, M'Kendree, George, Emory, and Hedding. Many have formed their ideas of bishops from the English bishops, too many of whom bask in wealth, luxury, and pleasure, evincing all the hauteur of high life. But the bishops of the Methodist Church, like those of the primitive Church, are among the most pious, humble, gentle, and devout men that I have ever seen; making the utmost sacrifices, and taking upon themselves the most incessant labor and toil, to serve their divine Master and the Church.

There were many more of whom I should speak with much pleasure, but I fear that I may become tedious. The pioneer preachers who have labored so much, made such great sacrifices, and endured such relentless persecution for the glory of God, the salvation of souls, and the establishment of a Church on a broad scale, will ever be embalmed in the grateful memory of all the true lovers of our Lord

and Saviour. I had such a warm attachment to Bishop Hedding, and felt such a profound respect for his memory, that I can hardly refrain from saying more of him. His life, to be sure, has been written by a very able hand ; but with me, who was for many years on terms of the closest intimacy with him, there are many pleasing recollections, indicative of his personal worth, which could not find way into his published life.

His piety was unaffected, simple, and deep, having no tincture of sour godliness ; he had the utmost urbanity and sweetness of temper and manner. I never saw him show the least degree of irritation of temper ; in conversation he was highly interesting, instructive, and intelligent ; in the families where he put up and visited, his company and presence was considered a great treat ; and in his presence persons would feel, without knowing why, that they ought to be better. His personal appearance was interesting and noble, being about six feet high, large and well proportioned, and weighing about two hundred and twenty-five pounds. In administering discipline he was strict but mild ; but when it became necessary he acted with great firmness. The case mentioned in his Life, of the way in which he settled a very ob-

stinate difficulty on Berry Circuit, between a local preacher and a class-leader, was an interesting one. We had great fears in that case that it would break up the society, but with astonishing tact he got it all settled and quiet, and the belligerent parties together in Christian love and union. There was a circumstance of a delicate nature, which but for his great prudence might have produced much evil. Some pious young women belonging to the Methodist Church, in confidence among themselves, mutually agreed to pray for the conversion of certain worthy but irreligious young men, in view of a probability of having them for husbands in such an event; but some how this got out and made a noise, and some persons seemed to think that the young women should be charged with imprudence, and they, poor things, felt deeply mortified; but with his usual prudence Mr. Hedding put it down by saying: "Why, what harm have these young women done? There is no impropriety that young women should wish to be well married, and it is quite proper that they should wish their husbands to be pious, and it is certainly right that they should pray for the conversion of young men." This proved a quietus.

An incident occurred while we were traveling

Barre Circuit, in Vermont, which evinced his decision of character. We had to travel a distance on a turnpike owned by one Judge Paine. The law provided that all persons going to and from public worship should go free of toll. The gate tender exacted toll of us, and stated that Judge Paine said that he cared nothing about the law, but would have toll of us. Mr. Hedding wrote to Judge Paine thus :

Judge Paine, Sir,—Mr. Young, my colleague, and myself are traveling on this circuit as preachers of the Gospel. We often pass your toll gate, and the man who tends it exacts toll of us contrary to law, and states that you say that you care nothing about the law, but will have the toll. I cannot believe such a scandalous report of you. If my opinion of you is correct, you will rebuke him for his insolence, and have the gate opened for us without further trouble ; if not, we shall take legal measures to have it done."

We had no further trouble about it.

Mr. Hedding's sermons, his private conversation, and his example were highly profitable to the young preachers ; and when I reflect on the many sweet seasons I had with him, in listening to his public discourses, delivered with zeal and eloquence, in criticizing each other, and in sweet converse on

religious, literary, and social topics; and especially when I think how often we have bowed together before God in devotion, it brings over my mind a pensive pleasure, which I can deeply feel but cannot describe. Often when I have thought how very cordial his friendship was, and how warm his affection, I have been led to feel a deep sympathy for him in the affliction which he endured in being most of the time separated from his wife, who was an intelligent and worthy companion.

I wish here to remark that there is one severe trial (and, indeed, far more severe than any other which they have to encounter; a trial of which, in general, but little seems to be said or thought,) which is endured by the bishops, presiding elders, and circuit preachers who have families: namely, that of being absent most of the time from their families and homes. Let any man of sensibility, who has an amiable and affectionate wife, whom he fondly loves, and dear children, to whom he is attached by the strongest ties, think what his feelings would be in having to spend near all his time far from them, and often having to leave them with scanty means of subsistence and comfort, his wife in delicate health, and his children, with weeping eyes, hanging to his knees.

There are many such cases, sufficiently affecting to wring tears from any person of sensibility if they were known; and if the zeal which now prompts the preachers to their glorious work should ever become cool, the splendid plan of itinerancy, which has effected such wonders, and which, if it is persevered in, will revolutionize the world, will be in a great measure broken up. May God avert such a calamity!

My oldest brother, James, of whom I have already spoken, was a preacher of great zeal and success. He traveled a while on a circuit with Mr. Hedding, and, like myself, had a great admiration of him. Gracious revivals attended my brother's labors. After the commencement of a revival he would sing with much delight some stanzas which had more merit in their sentiment than in their beauty of poesy. They commenced thus:

"O how I have longed for the coming of God,
And sought him by praying and searching his word!
By watching and fasting my soul was oppressed,
Nor would I give over till Jesus had blessed.

"The tokens of mercy at length did appear;
According to promise, he answered my prayer;
And glory was opened in floods on my soul,
Salvation from Zion beginning to roll," etc.

Nothing seemed so much to excite his feelings as to find a sinner mourning to know a Saviour's love. But he labored too hard for his strength, and brought on a lung complaint, which, to the great grief of all who knew his personal worth, bore him to an early grave. He passed in holy triumph to the valley of the shadow of death.

As but few of Bishop Hedding's sermons have been published, I presume it will be very acceptable to the reader to find here a synopsis of two or three of those which I had the pleasure to hear. One was on John xii, 26, last clause: "If any man serve me, him will my Father honor."

"The Saviour had just been teaching his disciples that they must be exclusively devoted to his holy service. 'He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.' What entire consecration, then, should we make of ourselves to God. The Saviour then adds: 'If any man serve me, let him follow me;' and then, to encourage us to this, what a heart-cheering promise he subjoins: 'And where I am, there shall also my servant be.' O that we may find a happy residence there! But now to the text: 'If any man serve me, him will my Father honor.'

“Let us consider what is implied in serving our Lord Jesus Christ, and the honor which the Father will bestow on those who do serve him.

“To render ourselves acceptable to the Saviour, we must believe on him, love him, and obey him.

“First, then, we must believe on him. Without faith it is impossible to please God. If we do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall not of course make any effort to serve him. If then we would serve the Saviour we must believe in him, and believe in him, too, in his true character as he is set forth in the Holy Scriptures, where he is exhibited to us as God, Jehovah, the everlasting Father, and Creator of all things. To believe that he is a mere man, only a created, dependent being, is no real or true faith in him; even infidels acknowledge that he was a virtuous, a good man, and a great reformer; and the faith of the Unitarian can no more be saving faith in Christ than the faith of the infidel.

“Again, in serving the Lord Jesus Christ, we must not only believe in him, we must love him also. St. Paul says: ‘If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha:’ let him be execrated and accursed. He says to us: “My son, give me thy heart.’ All appearances of religion, all

forms and ceremonies, foreign to the heart, are not only useless, but offensive to God, and plunge us yet deeper in guilt and woe. We should feel that we can say to our blessed Saviour, as Peter did: "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee;" and joyfully add, in the language of inspiration: 'As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.' This love should be fervent, constant, and ceaseless. Let us think how he suffered, bled, and died, that we might live, and surely we shall be ready to exclaim, with St. John, 'We love him, because he first loved us.'

"And, further, we must not only believe in him and love him, but we must also obey him; and this obedience must spring from faith and love. 'If ye love me,' says the great Redeemer, 'keep my commandments.' The true faith of the Gospel works by love, and purifies the heart; it leads us to 'add to our faith virtue, to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

“Thus we see what is implied in the broad expression of the Saviour, ‘*If any man serve me.*’

“He then annexes a most gracious promise for the encouragement and comfort of all who serve him: ‘Him will my Father honor.’

“Let us now consider well the honor which the Father will confer on those who serve his Son. And first, he will adopt them as his children. ‘Wherefore,’ says he, ‘come out from among them;’ that is, from the wicked and ungodly; ‘and be ye separate, saith the Lord; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.’ What greater honor could we desire, than to be the sons and daughters of Almighty God? How often do persons arrogate to themselves honor, by tracing their pedigree to a worthy and noble source; but how trifling are such honors in comparison to the honor of having the King of kings and Lord of lords for our Father.

“Again, the children of God shall be honored by having the angels of God for their servants. St. Paul assures us that the angels are servants to the heirs of salvation. What distinguishing honor, that sinners like us may not only have our sins all forgiven, but be elevated to the state of being the sons and

daughters of God, and have the angels of God for our servants! How happily is this expressed by that elegant hymn composed by Mr. Wesley, on the occasion of persecution in Ireland, when the ruthless mob offered a bounty of ten pounds to any person who would kill a Methodist:

‘Angels our servants are,
And keep in all our ways;
And in their hands they bear
The sacred sons of grace:
Our guardians to that heavenly bliss,
They all our steps attend;
And God himself our Father is,
And Jesus is our friend.’

“Moreover, the servants of Jesus Christ shall have the high honor of being his brethren. ‘Wherefore,’ says the apostle, ‘he is not ashamed to call them brethren.’ And the Saviour himself says that ‘whosoever shall do the will of my Father, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.’ With what ecstasy of joy should we be filled at the thought of the honor of having Him for our brother, of whom the great command has gone forth: ‘All the angels of God shall fall down and worship him.’

“Furthermore, they shall be honored with the gracious presence of God when about to pass through

the valley of the shadow of death. From the days of the martyred Stephen to the present time, it has been a very common circumstance for those who have served the Saviour to be attended with very special manifestations of the presence and grace of God in their trying hour. The venerable Wesley, in his departing moments, triumphantly exclaimed: 'The best of all is God is with us.'

"The servants of Christ will also be honored with an escort of angels to paradise. 'Lazarus also died, and was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom;' that is, to paradise, where they shall be honorably seated with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

"Finally, when Christ 'shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,' his servants shall have an honorable part in the resurrection of the just; an honorable place among the righteous, when the Judge shall separate them from the wicked; and finally be honorably seated as kings and priests to God on thrones of glory at the right hand of God in heaven.

"From what has been said we learn, first, that the wicked have very erroneous ideas of Christians.

They imagine that they are a set of poor, sorrowful sojourners, abandoning all the sources of honor and pleasure here for the prospect of something better hereafter; whereas they are the only people on earth who are truly honorable and happy.

“We learn also that the wicked have wrong views of themselves; they imagine that they are honorable and worthy of praise. But can it be honorable to sin against God? Can it be honorable to serve the devil? God says: ‘Them that honor me I will honor; and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.’

“We further learn that the servants of Christ should not quail under the browbeating persecution of the wicked, but that they should triumph in God and rest in the joyful hope of eternal honor at his right hand.”

I will now give a synopsis of a sermon I heard him preach on the *Fall and Recovery of Peter*. His text was Luke xx, 62: “And Peter went out and wept bitterly.”

“The fidelity of the sacred writers in recording the errors, follies, and crimes of those who are set forth as champions of the religion which they professed, is a very strong proof of the truth and authenticity of the Holy Scriptures.

“Peter was one of the most prominent men of all who attended on the Saviour’s ministry, and followed him in the days of his humiliation. He had heard his inimitable discourses, had seen his numerous and wonderful miracles, had been fed by the bounty of his goodness, and received the promise of sitting on one of the twelve thrones. He had on various occasions avowed his strong attachment to his Master, and declared his readiness to die for him. But how painful is the result when his fidelity is put to the test! He becomes cowardly, and resorts to the meanest subterfuge to screen himself from danger. I wish now to call your attention to the circumstances which led to Peter’s crime, the nature of his crime, and his recovery.

“First, then, what were the circumstances which led to the melancholy fall of Peter.

“The first circumstance seems to have been an improper confidence in himself, in the fullness of which he had said to his Master, ‘Though all men forsake thee, *I will not* ;’ and, as we have seen, avowed his readiness to die for him. How little we know what we may do if our reliance is on our own strength! ‘Without me,’ says the blessed Saviour, ‘ye can do nothing.’ How earnestly, then, should we pray, like

David: 'Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me.'

"The next circumstance was cowardice. He saw that they had taken his Master, and was aware how cruelly they would treat him; and he yielded to the fear of man, which always brings a snare, and often leads into sin. Indeed, the fear of man is the great source of irreligion in the world, and the potent cause of Christians not being more faithful. Hence it is that our divine Lord has so strongly warned us against it. saying: 'Fear not men, who can destroy the body only; but fear God, who can cast both soul and body into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him.'

"The next circumstance which led to Peter's crime, was that he followed the Saviour *afar off*. Nothing can be more dangerous to a Christian than this. Whenever we attempt a trimming course in religion, fall back and follow Christ afar off, we are verging on an entire fall. Our safety and happiness depend on our keeping close to the bleeding side of our Lord and Master. Our feeling should be:

'Closer and closer let us cleave
To his beloved embrace.'

"Another circumstance which had a strong evident source in leading Peter into crime, and one

which never fails to have a baneful influence, was that he got into the company of the wicked. Never was anything truer than the declaration of Solomon, that the '*companion* of fools shall be destroyed.' If you have any desire for salvation, take heed to the company you keep. If any circumstance requires us to go among the wicked in the discharge of duty, we may expect that the grace of God will keep us; but if no duty calls us there, our situation will be very dangerous. If a professor of religion will stand at a gambling table and look on with complacency, or at a bar, and pleasingly look among the bottles and decanters containing the liquid poison which is to inflame all the depraved appetites and vicious passions, and hurry souls on to hell, he is closely verging on the road to death.

"Let us now consider the nature of Peter's crime. And first, he was guilty of lying, and that repeatedly; he declared positively that he was not one of the followers of Jesus; and again, that he did not even know him. Lying is a sin of a very pernicious nature, and calculated to disturb the quiet and repose of society. What an unhappy and fermented state are neighborhoods often kept in by the lying of some vicious person. Lying is forbidden in the strongest

terms in the word of God, which also informs us that liars will have their part with whoremongers, sorcerers, and idolaters. Let all, then, observe the injunction of the apostle: 'Lie not one to another.' Peter was also guilty of using very profane language; he cursed and swore, in direct violation of the instruction of the Saviour, who has said, 'Swear not at all.' Swearing is a vice of great moral turpitude; and the more so, as it is a sin committed directly against God, and without any inducement, as no possible pleasure or profit can be obtained by it; it entails guilt, condemnation, and judgment. 'Because of swearing the land mourneth.'

"Again, Peter seems to have fallen into a species of perjury. He said, with an oath, 'I know not the man.' This was an oath of confirmation, according to the Jewish usage, which was to be an end of all strife, and accordingly they say no more to him about it. Perjury is one of the most shocking crimes that can be committed, and sometimes partakes of all the turpitude of murder. Where there are persons who will be guilty of perjury, property, character, and even life are unsafe. It is much to be feared that many persons of standing in society are in the habit of disregarding their oath of office; and although

there is in this no malignant design, yet it has a tendency to do away the awful solemnity and deep responsibility which should always attend an oath. Besides, when God is invoked to witness our sincerity and obligation to speak the truth, we should realize that the obligation is very imposing and solemn.

“If the history of Peter closed here, what a dark cloud would brood over it. How sorrowfully should we think of one who had been foremost in attending the Saviour through all of his ministry, and was so strongly attached to him, and had listened so much to the words of life falling from his gracious lips, and then going down in darkness, like stars that fall to rise no more. But having wound our way through the gloomy labyrinth of crime and darkness, we turn to consider the circumstances which led to his recovery, and the happy result which followed.

“The first circumstance to which our attention is directed by the sacred historian is the crowing of the cock. The Saviour had told Peter that he would thrice deny him before the cock would crow; this he had done, and seemed not to be awakened to a sense of his guilt till he heard the cock crow, which instantly awoke him to a sense of his fallen condition.

“God often makes use of small instrumentalities to

effect great objects. The crowing of the cock was, perhaps, more effectual in rousing Peter than the voice of an archangel would have been. It is a very common error to look for blessings to come through some great display; but God usually grants them through means calculated to humble our pride. The Jews asked for a sign, and the Greeks sought for wisdom; but the apostles preached Christ—a stumbling-block to the Jews, and foolishness to the Greeks. So little does God seek any compromise with the wisdom of the world. Let us be careful, then, never to despise the day of small things. Mr. Fletcher, that great light of the Church, whose writings on polemic divinity have produced such an astonishing change in the world, had his attention first directed in a way which governed the future course of his life, by the religious conversation of an old woman, who, as he said, talked so sweetly about her Jesus that it riveted him to the spot. Naaman, who had the command of the Assyrian army, was cured of his leprosy by attending to the remarks which a captive maid made to his wife. Many persons, in their pride and ostentation, will refuse to listen to the preaching of the Gospel, unless it comes in a style of learning and eloquence. It is very probable that these persons may

lose the very instruction which, to them, would prove the savour of life unto life.

“Although to others the crowing of the cock had no interest, to Peter it was most thrilling, as it reminded the words of him of his Master, and also of the awful condition into which he had fallen. A feeling of distress came over him.

“The next circumstance which led to his recovery was, that he saw that the eyes of the Saviour were upon him. In his distress he looked to see if Jesus saw him; and how was his heart pierced with the deepest grief when he saw that those eyes which had been a fountain of tears, on account of the wickedness of the people, were fixed on him—the remembrance of all the grace and kindness of his Lord and master; and what a wretch did he now feel himself to be, that while his Master was enduring everything that the malignant rage of his countrymen could inflict, he himself had augmented those sufferings by repeatedly denying him. How should we remember that the eyes of the adorable Saviour are on us; and when we recollect this, can we think of sinning against him? Let us never forget that he sees our ways and knows our hearts. Peter could no longer repress his grief; and he could not think of remaining longer in the com-

pany of the enemies of his Master; he determined to fly from the scene of temptation and danger. Thus we are brought, almost insensibly, to the last circumstance which led to his recovery. 'He went out, and wept bitterly.' He deeply feels all the enormity of his guilt; his heart is penetrated with the deepest sorrow; his bosom heaves with all the mingled emotions of guilt, sorrow, and despair. The stars of heaven seem to frown upon him; the earth seems ready to swallow him up; pray, he cannot; he feels that he has sinned beyond redemption or forgiveness.

"A gleam of hope might enter his mind in the remembrance of the compassion and kindness of his Master, and the gracious manner in which he had always received sinners; but the chilling thought rushes on his mind that they had not denied the Saviour. He is about to resign himself to utter despair, and exclaim, 'Who shall deliver me?' when a voice of mercy whispers 'My grace is sufficient for thee.' A heavenly peace comes over his mind; he remembers the words of his Master: 'When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren;' he knows not what duties may be before him, but his mind is prepared for whatever God may call him to do. He remem-

bered that his Master had said to him and the other apostles, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.' He waits for the way to be opened, and is ready to enter on the great work.

"Henceforth Peter becomes one of the most bold, firm, intrepid, and successful servants of Christ who ever lived; and finally suffered the most painful martyrdom that the malignant spirit of his enemies could inflict, with joy and triumph, and was, no doubt, borne by angels to Abraham's bosom, and there, in paradise, joyfully unites in praises to God and the Lamb.

"From a general review of this subject let us learn, first, to realize that our own strength is perfect weakness, and that all our trust should be in the power of divine grace.

"Again, let us learn that there is no safety but in drawing nigh to God, and keeping close to the bleeding side of our blessed Saviour.

"Also let us learn to avoid temptations and snares, by shunning the company of the vicious.

"Further, let us learn never to yield to a man-fearing spirit, but say like David: 'The Lord is my Shepherd; I will not fear what man can do unto me.'

"Moreover, let us learn to be attentive to all the

means of instruction and grace which God may use to reclaim us from a sinful course, and lead us in the way of salvation.

“Especially let us never forget that the eyes of God are always upon us.

“Above all, let all who desire to flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold of eternal life, retire from the dangers which encompass them, and go alone before God and weep bitterly in remembrance of their sins, and in deep earnest call upon God for mercy.

“And, finally, let it be known to all, that, whatever their guilt may be, if they ‘return unto the Lord he will have mercy upon them, and to our God, he will abundantly pardon.’”

I wish to give a brief outline of one more sermon which I heard him deliver; but how I wish I could do it in the rapturous eloquence and glowing style in which it flowed from his lips, which seemed, like the lips of Isaiah, to have been touched with a live coal from off the altar. His text was :

“Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.” Luke ii, 10.

“This is the most important message ever announced to man. The annunciation was made to humble and

undesigning shepherds, who were engaged in watching their flocks by night on the plains of Bethlehem, in the land of Palestine, the home of the patriarchs, prophets, and seers, and long memorable as the theater on which God had displayed the wonders of his power and grace.

“For a long lapse of ages, in accordance with the ritual law which God had given to his people, the favored posterity of Abraham, the ancient friend of God, oblations, sacrifices, and offerings had been made in great abundance; all of which pointed to the coming of the Son of God, to be offered as the great propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. This great and glorious event had been the subject of promises and prophecies for thousands of years. The first promise ever made to fallen man was in reference to it, and those exceedingly great and precious promises were repeated and renewed in a great variety of ways and forms until their fulfillment, which now formed the subject of the glowing theme of congratulation of the holy and delighted angel just now on wings in his descent from the regions of light and glory. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, exultingly joining the herald of good tidings on the joyful occa-

sion, praising God and saying: ‘Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace, and good-will toward men.’

“Here let us pause, and reflect upon the nature of this great message of mercy and grace. Man had fallen into the deepest state of guilt and woe, entirely beyond the power and below the wish of rescuing himself. No created intelligence could extend to him relief. All the angels of heaven could not redeem him. In this awful dilemma, in the infinite plenitude of divine love, God sent to this sin-stricken world his only, his beloved Son, to redeem us from death. The law which man had violated was clamorous for satisfaction. Justice was stern and unyielding in its demands. Christ was made under the law, and honored it by keeping it perfectly: and by taking our nature, and undertaking as our Redeemer, and by his sufferings for us, satisfied all the claims of the law, and liquidated all the demands of justice; so that God can be just and yet justify him that believes on Christ.

“Thus, by the coming of the Saviour and the great work he performed, the way is opened whereby whosoever will may, by faith in him, receive eternal life as the free gift of God; and also all who would re-

ceive eternal life before he made his appearance in the world, by believing on the Saviour to come. How indescribably good must be the tidings which brought eternal life to all who would accept it. It is this that illuminates the gloomy path of life, and throws around us a halo as we pass the lone valley of the shadow of death, and points the Christian to a throne of glory at God's right hand.

“But there is some difference of opinion as to the grace manifested by the coming of Christ; some theologians being of opinion that Christ came only to die for the elect; but if such were the fact his object in coming would not be very important, inasmuch as the elect never were lost, and never as such could be. And above all, if such were the fact, his coming could not be good tidings of great joy to the reprobates, as he would not in that case make salvation possible for them. To make this plain, suppose a certain man, and call his name John, to be one of the reprobates or non-elect, and that Christ of course did not come to save him, or make it possible that he ever would be saved. Now then the coming and mission of Christ, it is clear, could not be good tidings of great joy to him; and the same would be true of every one that God had decreed from eternity should

live and die in sin and be damned forever. Either then this shocking sentiment must be false, or the message announced by the angel of God must be false.

“From this subject we may learn the greatness of God’s love to the world, as exhibited by his sending his only begotten Son, that the world might be saved by him.

“We learn again that we should love God with all the soul, mind, and strength.

“Further, we learn that we should love one another with a pure heart fervently. ‘If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another,’ says St. John.

“We also learn that angels sympathize with us, and feel much interest for our salvation.

“On the whole let us, my beloved brethren, learn to give our hearts more fervently, and ourselves more devotedly, to our God and Saviour.

“And to you who neither know nor love God, let me solemnly and affectionately ask you, Why will you die? Christ has come to save you, he has died that you may live; your sins are atoned for, and now the Spirit and the Bride say come; for God’s sake, for the sake of the dying groans and gushing blood of the Son of God, and for the sake of your own precious and immortal souls, do not refuse to live.”

St. Paul says that it has pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save those who believe. The preaching of the Gospel is the usual means which God uses for the conversion of sinners, yet other means are sometimes used with success. It is, however, probable that in such cases the way has been prepared by the Gospel.

I was acquainted with a Freewill Baptist preacher in Vermont, who was very pious, zealous, and successful as a preacher, who gave me a singular account of his conversion. He said that he was a soldier of the American army in the Revolutionary war; it happened that he and a British soldier, isolated from any others, met and came into a close personal encounter, and both being large, athletic men, the conflict was severe, and both were badly wounded; he was made a cripple for life; and while they were both down, and in a deadly struggle, a thought of the sufferings of Christ for him came over his mind; he looked to Christ for grace, and in a moment his heart was filled with the Saviour's love, and a love to all mankind. He loved the man who was striving to kill him, and would gladly have embraced him in the arms of affection; but this was impossible. He instantly loosed his grasp from him,

and stopped all struggle; his antagonist, supposing he was expiring, left him covered with blood. His rapture of joy was like a pleasing dream. He lay and praised God a while, and then moved off to where he had his wounds dressed, which were so bad that it excused him from further service in the army, and he became a valiant soldier of the cross.

In New Hampshire I was well acquainted with an elderly and very intelligent man by the name of Morris, who had long been engaged in sea-faring life. He related to me a remarkable circumstance of the conversion of a sailor. In tropical regions a ship lay off from an island and sent a boat to the island to obtain a supply of water. The watering party left one man with the boat, while they went in pursuit of water. At the shore this man went in to take a bath; and swimming out some distance from the shore, he was suddenly alarmed by seeing a crocodile approaching him; he swam with all possible speed for the shore; but as he neared it his terror was increased by seeing a tiger rush from the thicket, and come bounding at him; but the danger behind pursued him so closely that he still pushed for the shore. The tiger made a leap for him, but just missed him; the crocodile caught the tiger, who made a desperate

struggle for a moment, but the monster of the deep drew him under water, and bore him off as his lawful prey. The sailor, to his great astonishment, found himself safe on the shore, and was so affected with a sense of his providential protection that he fell on his knees, praised God for his wonderful deliverance, and made a covenant to serve him forever; and subsequently, to the astonishment of his comrades, lived a pious life.

A pious woman of distinguished talents told me that she and her husband, with great effort, had built them a very splendid house; it was just finished, to the turning of the key, in elegant style; they were just preparing to move into it when it took fire and burned to ashes. While the house was in flames a deep sense of the vanity and uncertainty of worldly treasure came over her mind, and she earnestly prayed to God to grant her a treasure in heaven which fire would not consume. God heard her prayer, and filled her soul with such unutterable joy that she shouted his praises aloud. The people thought that she was crazy; but she blessed God that the delusion had never left her.

In the early part of my life, in New Hampshire, a man was engaged, in the vernal season, in making

domestic sugar from the sugar tree ; having what was then called a great run of sap, that is, an abundance of sugar water, he was engaged in boiling it down in the night, and having filled his kettles, and put up the fire, he laid himself down on some straw before the fire to enjoy repose in sleep. The pole on which the kettles hung took fire and burned off ; the kettles fell, and tipping toward him, poured much of their boiling contents on him. He instantly awoke, in the utmost agony from the dreadful scalding which he had received. His first impression was he had died in his sleep and awoke in hell. The remembrance of his whole life came up to him at once ; and especially how many calls God had given him by his Spirit and providence, and how often he had been almost persuaded to be a Christian. But now, alas ! all was gone, and gone forever. He thought with himself, O if I could once more have a state of probation, how would I improve it to save my soul. But after a little he discovered, to his unspeakable joy, what his real situation was, and with great care he recovered. He did not now need exhortation and entreaties to persuade him not to neglect the great salvation. He earnestly sought, and joyfully found the pearl of great price. He said that it was impos-

sible to conceive the horrors he felt while he conceived himself to be in hell.

Let it be considered how horrible it must be for an immortal soul actually to find itself in a state of everlasting misery and despair.

A talented preacher gave me an account of the conversion of a young woman under the following circumstances: A Methodist chapel had been erected near the house of a wealthy man, who was so opposed to the Methodists that he would not suffer any of his family to go to the Methodist meeting. A daughter, who had grown to womanhood, had been conversed with by a pious Methodist woman living near by, and had become awakened; and when a zealous and warm preacher was to preach in the chapel, the young woman took her stand in a chamber, where, by raising a window, she could see the preacher and hear all he said. The discourse took strong hold of her mind, and about the time that it closed she became so deeply moved that she fell to the floor, and lay in a state of apparent insensibility. Her mother, hearing the fall, rushed to the chamber, and was much alarmed to find her daughter in that condition. She hastily called her husband, whose alarm was great; and the village doctor was sent for in haste;

who, on his arrival, pronounced it a dangerous fit, which would require the most cautious medical remedies. The good Methodist woman had kept herself well posted in all these movements, and now made her appearance in the chamber, and told the parents that Mary was in no danger; that it was the exercise of her mind, and that if they would leave Mary to her she would be answerable that all would be well. But she heard the doctor say to the father: "If you wish me to do anything for your daughter, who, I assure you, is in a very dangerous condition, you must keep that troublesome woman away." So to prevent being turned out she quietly withdrew, all the while fervently praying to God that he would direct the matter. The doctor now left to return home to get the necessary medicine; the good woman, who was at hand, entered the chamber and said, "I think some singing will do Mary good;" and as they did not suppose it would harm her, they did not object, so she commenced:

"Alas! and did my Saviour bleed?
And did my sovereign die?
Would he devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?"

A glow of joy appeared on the countenance of Mary.

“ Was it for crimes that I have done
 He groan'd upon the tree ?
 Amazing pity ! grace unknown !
 And love beyond degree ! ”

The glow of joy increased, and she opened her lovely blue eyes, to the great happiness of her weeping parents.

“ Well might the sun in darkness hide,
 And shut his glories in,
 When Christ, the mighty Maker, died
 For man, the creature's sin. ”

Again she opened her eyes and exclaimed, “Glory !” then sank back in silence. Her parents were overwhelmed with astonishment, and filled with hope and fear.

“ Thus might I hide my blushing face,
 While his dear cross appears ;
 Dissolve my heart in thankfulness,
 And melt mine eyes to tears. ”

She opened her eyes, clasped her hands, and shouted, “Glory ! glory !” her parents looking on with increased wonder and astonishment. Again, with a sweeter and higher tone of joy and ecstasy, the Methodist woman sang :

“ But drops of grief can ne'er repay
 The debt of love I owe :

Here, Lord, I give myself away ;
'Tis all that I can do."

Mary sprang to her feet ; she clasped her hands ; she leaped for joy, and shouted, "Glory ! glory ! glory !" and exclaimed : "I have found him ! I have found my blessed Saviour !" She flew to her parents, clasped them in her arms, saying in perfect ecstasy, "I am happy ! I am happy ! O won't you love my dear Jesus ?"

In the midst of this the doctor returned. Poor fellow ! he felt flat. All the display of his medical sagacity about Mary's dangerous fit was blown up to the moon. He had lost his patient ; she had no occasion for his nostrums. She was now full of life. To complete his mortification, all this had been done by the agency of the troublesome woman he had so much despised. This circumstance gave an impetus to the revival and prosperity of the Church.

Sometimes a few words will be carried by the Spirit to the heart of a sinner and lead him to salvation. When I was on a circuit in New Hampshire, and on one occasion was preaching on the subject of the danger of suffering mere trifles to divert our attention from the great salvation, I observed that there might be some present who had sold their Saviour

for less than Judas did. I afterward learned from a pious woman that just those words found way to her heart so forcibly as to prove the means of her awakening and conversion.

One of our preachers related to me a case where a brief exposition of a striking sentiment proved the means of converting a man of distinction, who had heard much excellent preaching without effect. A generous, wealthy, and noble-hearted man lived near a chapel, and always made his house a first-rate home for the preachers, where they were received with open doors and arms and kind hearts. At length there was a quarterly meeting at the place, and he had entertained the preachers with his usual kindness. At the close of the meeting a preacher, who was a favorite of his, when about taking his leave pressed his hand affectionately, and said to him: "Sir, we feel greatly obliged to you for your kindness, and we enjoy well the bounty of your hospitality; but still there is one thought which is painful to us. We greatly fear that, after all you do for us and the Church, you will only be as scaffolding in building the house of God, and when the house is finished the scaffolding will be pulled down and burned." This thought reached his heart; he reflect-

ed on it much; it brought him earnestly to seek the grace of God, and with shouting he was made a precious stone in God's house.

We have many kind friends who are in precisely the situation of that noble-hearted man. If this shall fall into any of their hands, I hope that his course will excite their attention, and that they will go and do likewise.

CHAPTER XI.

A Protracted Meeting at Lebanon, Ohio—Bishop Soule—Ex-Bishop Hamline—A Beautiful Spring—Conversion of a Distiller—A Melancholy Spectacle at Cincinnati—Quarterly Meeting—Rev. W. B. Christie—Sad Tidings—Ironton, Ohio—Rev. J. W. Young—Rev. W. T. Hand—Rev. Messrs. Creighton, Given, Spahr, and Vananda—Temperance—Treating at Elections—A Bill in the House of Representatives—Custom of Members—First Temperance Society in the West—A Humorous Incident—A Minister and Drunken Woman—Decline of Temperance Efforts.

SEVERAL years ago I attended a long protracted meeting at Lebanon, Ohio, and put up with Brother Soule, now senior bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, who then lived there, and had the pleasing opportunity of renewing our early acquaintance when we labored in the same conference, (the New England.) Brother Soule was a splendid man, of distinguished talents, deep piety, and great dignity. His wife was an excellent woman. At this meeting I had the great pleasure of hearing Brother Hamline preach a number of times. It is a mental feast to hear him ; but I had a greater one in listening to his

charming conversation. The meeting was a glorious season. There was great harmony and good feeling; near one hundred were added to the Church; most of them were converted. Lebanon is a very pleasant inland town, with a set of good citizens, and in one of the best agricultural districts in the whole country.

While at Lebanon I spent a night with a Brother Smith, who lived one or two miles out of town. He was an excellent man, with a very interesting family. Near his house was a large and beautiful spring of clear water. Before his conversion he had commenced building a distillery at this spring, and had laid out four thousand dollars on it. At this state of the work he became awakened, and felt deeply the importance of seeking the salvation of his soul; but whenever he would attempt to pray to God for mercy the distillery would get between him and his Saviour. He would stop and try to quiet his conscience by saying in his mind: "If I do not make whisky, others will; and those who want it will get it, and I may as well make it for them as anybody else; besides, it is wanted for medicine; the doctors all use it, and it is also used for manufacturing purposes. Well now I can pray; but stop! am I sure that no bad use will be made of my whisky? Well,

it may be, but what of that; am I my brother's keeper? I can't be accountable for what others do. I can now pray; but hark! what voice is that; did I hear it or was it merely imaginary? 'I died to save souls, and will you make whisky to destroy them, and then hope that I will hear your prayers?' What shall I do? I have laid out the most of my capital; it may distress my family to lose it. O! well, I have just thought; I will sell it and that will save my family from poverty. Surely I can now pray; but something whispers, 'Will you not be accessory? and will not God hold you answerable for the families that are ruined and the souls that are destroyed?' " Thus, wherever he turned, his distillery was, like Banquo's ghost, constantly before him. Thus pushed upon every side, he finally said: "I will go to the Bible, and see if I can find something there which will direct me." He got that holy book, and determined that he would open it in the hope that the first sentence which his eye should light upon would afford him light upon the subject. Was it accidental, or was it the finger of God which directed him on the occasion? The first sentence which he saw was the very one which above all others would seem precisely adapted to the occasion. Recollect that his

mind had been in a deep struggle between worldly interests on the one hand, and the salvation of his soul on the other. Are you curious, dear reader, to know what the words were which on this occasion sank to the very bottom of his soul? You will, perhaps, think me superstitious, but really I cannot resist the impression that the same Spirit which directed the evangelist to write them now directed his eyes to them. It was not merely his salvation which was at stake, but the salvation of many families. Now for the words; well, they were the words of Him who spake as never man spake, and contained one of the most interesting and impressive questions ever propounded to man, and one which we shall all do well most solemnly to consider, and carry into all the business plans and purposes of life. Here they are: "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" "It is enough!" he exclaimed, while the tears gushed from his eyes. His purpose was fixed in a moment; the distillery was demolished, and access to the throne of grace was opened. He tasted that the Lord was gracious, and went on his way rejoicing. Go thou and do likewise.

On my return to Cincinnati I saw a melancholy

spectacle, a man hung for the murder of his wife. He stated that the commencement of his course of crime, which led him to that tragical end, was that in his youth he associated with bad boys in breaking the holy Sabbath. Let parents and boys well consider this.

The river was now frozen over, and I had to buy a horse and return home by land. On my way I attended a quarterly meeting in Brown County, and preached twice. Brother Christie presided, and preached twice with the holy unction and with great effect. A number were converted, the brethren were much strengthened in the way of life, and altogether the season was a precious one. Brother Salters, a man worthy of much esteem and confidence, left Cincinnati with me, but did not stop with me at the quarterly meeting, as important business urged him homeward. On his way he learned that an erroneous story had somehow got out, and was on its way to my family, that I was dead. With great kindness, and to save my family from affliction, he took much pains to hurry on intelligence to my family that such news would reach them, but that it was incorrect. Accordingly it did so reach them, and his kindness saved them from much grief.

I came to this place, (Ironton, Ohio,) in 1851. The place was new, and a few scattering Methodists in it. It was included in the circuit then traveled by Brother Wesley Young, one of the most industrious and useful men that I ever saw. Brother Holliday succeeded him, who was an excellent and useful man. Ironton was then made a station, and Brother Hand was appointed to it. He was a very eloquent man, and had a good revival in our then unfinished meeting-house. The next minister appointed to this station was Brother Creighton, a zealous, industrious, and useful preacher. He too had a good revival. The next preacher in charge here was Brother Givin. He was a man of splendid education, deep piety, and great usefulness; he also had a good work. He delivered a course of lectures on the prophecies, which were got up with great study and effort. They were very learned, interesting, and excellent. Our next preacher was Brother Spahr. He was a very agreeable man, well informed, an able preacher, and had a good revival. I commenced preaching in the place at the school-house; the meetings were well attended, and we had precious seasons. I established prayer-meetings which were crowded, but only one man besides myself to pray; I filled up the time by exhorta-

tion. The brother now in charge is Brother Vananda ; he is a very pious, learned, and able preacher, of indomitable industry ; has had a good work, and is much beloved by the people.

I will now return to speak a little of my course in relation to the interesting cause of temperance. In early life I was much impressed with a sense of the great evils of drunkenness, and long before any temperance societies were formed I was engaged in single-handed efforts on the subject. In the early part of my ministry it was not uncommon for preachers to take their moderate drams of intoxicating liquors ; but, conscious that it was a bad habit, I kept myself from it, and modestly used my influence to keep them from it, and in this often succeeded well. In the State of New Hampshire it had become a uniform practice, whenever a man was elected to the Legislature, to make a great treat, as it was called ; that is, to furnish to all the electors as much intoxicating liquors as they could be induced to take, and thus produce a horrid bacchanalian scene. As soon as my age made me eligible for the office I was elected, in the township in which I was born and raised, as a member of the House of Representatives. After 'expressing to my fellow-citizens

my sense of obligation to them for the confidence placed in me, I told them that they must excuse me from giving a treat, as I considered it productive of evil, and morally wrong, and could not therefore do it; but I would deposit with those who had the charge of the school funds an amount of money more than they would expect to be given in a treat, to be added to those funds. I also introduced a bill into the Legislature, when in session, prohibiting the nefarious practice of giving treats directly or indirectly, either before or after the election, and subjecting any one who did it to the loss of his seat in the Legislature. Contrary to my expectations, I got it passed into a law without any opposition, and thus that pernicious practice was broken up throughout the state.

It had always been the uniform usage with the members of the Legislature, at their boarding-houses, to have the sideboard well supplied with almost every variety of intoxicating liquors, of which all the members drank at pleasure, and invited their friends to drink, and the expense of it was clubbed; that is, divided among the boarders. I told the man of the house that I drank no spirits; I entirely disapproved of the practice, and should pay no spirit bill. I soon

prevailed on all the boarders to drink no more, and thus it was banished from the house.

Having succeeded so well thus far, I tried it with the boarders of other houses, and soon had it banished from a great part of the boarding-houses in the town. How happy it would be for the country if such a reformation could be effected in Congress! When the temperance reformation came on it found me far ahead, and rejoicing to see it come, and prepared to lead off in the ranks with all my heart. I immediately commenced delivering temperance addresses. As far as I know, I formed the first temperance society in the Western country. More than one hundred joined on the day it was formed. I have often felt much consolation when men have told me what utter ruin I had saved them from by persuading them to quit their drunken habits and join the temperance society; and when women, with their eyes glistening with tears of joy, told me what woes I had saved them and their children from by persuading their husbands to quit the fatal cup, and join the temperance ranks, my mind has been led to dwell upon the exquisite joys, in a future state, of those who turn many to righteousness.

I sometimes related a humorous incident which

happened in Massachusetts in the early part of the temperance reformation, for the purpose of showing the people what sort of company they throw themselves in by moderate tippling. At an assemblage of ministers of the Gospel and officers of the Church, it was proposed, at the close of other business, to form a temperance society; this was generally gone into with much readiness; but one professed minister of Christ said in a brief speech: "I am in favor of temperance, but I think it sometimes necessary and proper to drink moderately. I drink a little myself, and think it does me good, and I am not willing to sign away my liberty." He then took his hat and started to leave; but, as he arrived at the outskirts of the assembly, an old woman in a state of intoxication, with tattered garments, and her personal appearance filthy, laid hold of him, and held him with a strong grasp, exclaiming, "Dare sir, I likes you so much; you and I thinks just alike; you thinks it does you good to drink a leetle, and I thinks a leetle does me good. And you don't want to sign away your liberty, and I don't want to sign away my liberty. And, dare sir, I likes you so much." All eyes were fixed upon him; it was a scene of deep mortification; he wrested himself from her, and crowded

his way back to the table of the secretary and subscribed his name to the pledge. To me it is a great affliction that the temperance efforts have died away, and drunkenness, with all its indescribable horrors, seems to be on the increase. I earnestly pray to God that he will in some way direct means to check the broad and turbid river of intemperance in its deadly course.

CHAPTER XII.

The Author's Connection with Legislation — Legislating and Preaching — Responsibility — Ministerial Tax — Injustice of the Law — Oppressive Exaction — A Baptist Preacher imprisoned — A Bill introduced into the Senate to repeal the Law — Nature of the Bill — Result of the Vote — Reintroduction of the Bill — Synopsis of Speech — Reply — Rejoinder — A tie Vote — Great Consternation — Finally carried — Taken to the House — Result — Determined Opposition — A noble Defense — The Bill for Religious Rights becomes a Law — The Past and Present of Methodism compared — Recollections — Christian Love and Union — Methodist Literature — Institution of Learning — Prospects of the Church — Doctrines — Organization — Missions — Wesley's grand Conception.

As a portion of my life has been spent in legislation, I will say a few things in reference to my connection therewith. I am aware that some persons think a minister of the Gospel should have nothing to do with legislation; but that, I think, depends on circumstances. When it would interfere with ministerial duties he should not; but when it will not, no good reason exists why he may not discharge the duties of a legislator. A local preacher in the Methodist Church has no particular charge; he has to pursue some labor or business to provide for himself and family, and can

as well preach at one place as another. Legislating no more interferes with his ministerial duties than merchandizing or farming. When I have been engaged in legislating, I have preached as much, and I think with quite as much success, as when I have been farming, or in any other business to support my family. I was in the Legislature of New Hampshire six sessions, one in the House and five in the Senate; and when I left that state I resigned my seat. In discharging my duties in the Legislature I felt a deep consciousness of my accountability to God, and my obligation faithfully to serve the public.

I have already spoken of my action, as a legislator, in favor of temperance, the remembrance of which has always afforded me consolation. It may be interesting to my readers to give a detailed account of my course there. There was one great object which I effected with much labor and perseverance, which was of so much interest to the public generally, and to our Church in particular, that I will here refer to. From the first organization of the state of New Hampshire, there existed a law by which the majority of the legal voters, in any township, could at any legal meeting vote to raise any sum for the support of a settled ministry; and, as I have be-

fore stated, this sum was levied, by a tax, on all the citizens of the township, the raising of which was attended with much trouble and difficulty, and sometimes with tedious lawsuits, as persons belonging to a different sect, to get rid of paying this tax, would resort to every expedient to evade the law. It will at once be seen that there was no justice or equality in such a law, and that no real religious liberty could be enjoyed under it. All dissenters felt it to be a grievous burden, but knew not how to get rid of it. Sometimes the only cow of a poor man, having a family who were in great need of it, would be attached and sold to pay a man for preaching, when the owner of the cow did not hear him, and did not believe his doctrine. In one instance a Baptist preacher was imprisoned, to force him to pay a tax to a preacher of another order whose doctrine he did not believe. It would take volumes to record the sufferings inflicted, and the oppressions endured, under that unjust law. Impressed with a sense of its injustice, savoring, as it did, so much of the Inquisition, I determined on making an effort to have the act repealed, and accordingly introduced a bill into the Senate to that effect, and substituted one in place of it, by which all persons voluntarily associating to build a house

of worship, or hire a minister of the Gospel, should be held to the fulfillment of their contract, but that no person should be compelled to go into such contract. I knew well that at first this measure would receive but a very meager support, and I said very little on the subject, except merely to explain it. When it came to a vote, myself and three others only were in the affirmative. The enemies of religious liberty chuckled, and congratulated themselves that this would be the last of Mr. Young's new-fangled notions about religious liberty. It was rumored that I was a deist, and had introduced a bill to repeal the Christian religion. The friends of religious liberty hung their heads in despondency, and said to me, "We shall never succeed, and may as well give up the controversy." "Do not say so," said I to them; "I obtained quite as large a support as I expected. We are right; let us stand firmly, and we are sure of success. The reform is now started, and it will be like the leaven in the three measures of meal, by which the whole was leavened."

At the next session I introduced the bill again into the Senate. I knew that the attention of the public had been turned to it, and determined now to push it vigorously, and made a long speech on the subject,

of which I will here give a synopsis, not only because I think it will be acceptable to the reader, but especially because the sentiments are such as should be cherished and disseminated at all times, and in all places. On introducing the bill I said: "Mr. President, I had the honor of presenting this same bill to the Senate at its last session. I did not, at that time, go into a discussion of the merits of the subject, because I knew it to be one of great importance, and I wished the Senate and the public to have time for mature reflection before I pushed it to final action; but before I proceed further I should be happy to hear what objections any gentleman may have to this measure, and will now wait to learn if there be any." I then took my seat.

A distinguished member of the Senate, a lawyer of eminence, then rose and addressed the Senate thus: "Mr. President, I do not think it necessary to say much on this subject. When the gentleman introduced his bill it seemed to have been concocted exclusively by himself, and to be a great favorite with him. When introduced into the Senate, at its last session, I presumed that the fate it met with then would have put the thing so soundly asleep that we should not have been troubled with it again. I

cannot imagine that this bill will call for any elaborate discussion. It does not appear to me possible that the Senate is going to uproot and overturn the old established religious institutions of the country, which have been sanctioned and approved by the wisdom of ages, and substitute for them some wild, fantastical experiment, which may lead the country into confusion and ruin."

He then took his seat, and I rose and said: "Mr. President, I am glad the gentleman has spoken with so much frankness, and I presume that his views may be considered an embodiment of the views of all who are opposed to religious liberty and equal rights. The gentleman seems to think it strange that the Senate should be called to act on a subject which cannot possibly have the least prospect of success. I hope that I shall be able to present this subject in such a light that its prospects will not prove as forlorn as the gentleman seems to imagine. He has also given us a graphic representation of the frightful danger to be apprehended, threatening the uprooting and overturning of old established customs and usages. According to the position assumed by him, no reformation should ever be undertaken, and Luther richly deserved all the persecution that

was heaped upon him for overturning the usages and customs of ages ; and even our Saviour himself would fall under his animadversions, inasmuch as his grand mission to the earth was to change the usages and customs of many ages. Now I hope, instead of being frightened out of their reason, the Senate will consider this bill in the spirit of candor, and act on it according to its merits. When we turn over the page of ecclesiastical history, and trace all the various religious institutions in their rise and progress, it will readily be perceived that false systems of religion have always needed the strong arm of human laws to sustain them. Not so, however, with the pure and holy religion established by the Gospel ; Christianity has always flourished most when it has been least connected with and trammelled by human laws, and left alone to the support of its Divine Author, and subjects of its grace. All it wants of legislators is to keep out of its sunshine. Whenever an effort is made to support the pure religion of the Son of God by human laws, it only corrupts it. It has been well said, that before the days of Constantine, the 'Christian Church had wooden pulpits, but golden preachers ;' and that after those days, when Constantine had corrupted Christianity in attempting

to establish it by law, the Church had 'golden pulpits, but wooden preachers.' It was by this means that the Church was corrupted, and all the darkness, and errors, and terrible persecutions of popery, by which millions suffered the cruelest tortures that bigotry and malice could inflict, were produced. The great Founder of Christianity has said, 'My kingdom is not of this world; if it were, my servants would fight for it;' and it can never come in contact with worldly policy and human law without being desecrated. By legislation you can make infidels and hypocrites; but you cannot make humble followers of Christ. If you commence to establish religion by law, why do you stop at the threshold? Why not make a law that every man shall love God with all his heart; and if he does not obey this law, fine, imprison, and whip him. The Saviour says: 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.' That is, the religion of the heart is not open to a gazing world; but by the existing law, you send a man out into the street to hunt up witnesses to prove, in a court of law, what his religion is. Is it possible that gentlemen opposed to re-

ligious liberty, can imagine that they will make men truly pious by compelling them to pay a man for preaching who is obnoxious to them, and preaches a doctrine which they do not believe? Are you likely to produce an influence favorable to devotion and genuine Christianity, by sending your sheriff or constable to take their only cow to pay a man for preaching whom they never hear? When their crying children go to bed supperless for want of the milk of which they have been deprived by the oppression of your law-religion, will the weeping mother be inclined to think that this is the same religion which the angels of God proclaimed to the world at the birth of the Saviour, when they broke forth in the heavenly song: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men?' No, Mr. President, it is not the same; it has no affinity with it, any more than the horrid practice of burning heretics is the same. It is an outrageous perversion of it. I appeal to gentlemen opposed to the bill now before them, to say that they do religiously believe our Saviour and his apostles would have desired that men who did not hear them preach, and who did not believe their doctrine, should be compelled by any act of human legislation to pay them for

preaching. I challenge gentlemen to say, upon their recollection of reading the New Testament, that they do so believe. No, they cannot; it would grate too harshly upon the understanding. I cannot take my seat without expressing a strong hope that our prison walls will no more reverberate with the wails of men immured within them for conscience' sake, for the sake of asserting their religious rights."

A few words of caviling were spoken by the opposition, but no formal reply was attempted. The vote was then taken by yeas and nays, and it was a tie. Much alarm now existed for fear that Dagon would finally fall before the ark of God, and great consternation pervaded the ranks of the established clergy.

At the next session I brought it up again, and again I delivered a speech, saying among other things that all efforts to oppose it would be futile; that the march of intelligence and the spirit of liberty could not be stopped; that gentlemen might as well attempt to stop the advance of the morning light in the eastern heavens, as to stop the spirit of inquiry which had now become rife among the people in relation to their religious rights and liberties. When the time came to decide the question it was put to vote, and carried by a large majority. The

bill then went to the House, where it elicited a very warm and exciting debate for several days. No subject in the Legislature of New Hampshire had ever called forth as much talent and effort; and after passing this severe ordeal the vote was taken by yeas and nays, and was tied, and thus laid over until the next session. The opposers of oppression now felt certain of ultimate success. At the next session I brought it up again in the Senate; no effort was now necessary in that department of the Legislature, and it silently passed through by a large majority, without opposition. It went to the House; its opposers knew that now was their last hope; they made a rally of desperation. All that bigotry, interest, talent, and intrigue could do, was done to save a dilapidated and fallen cause. Long and dolorous speeches were delivered in the House, setting forth the mournful and distracted condition of society, if the standing (*alias* fallen) clergy should lose their salaries and influence. On the other side speeches of glowing eloquence were delivered, descanting upon the principles of religious liberty and equal rights, and showing, with a force of argument which nothing could resist, that Christianity never would, and never could suffer in consequence of these principles prevailing.

One of the most talented and eloquent men of the House, not being a Methodist, said, in a speech which bore all before it: "Thus gentlemen talk loudly of the bad condition of society if the influence of the standing clergy is checked. But to whom are we to look for the prevalence of a healthy, moral, and religious influence in society? Is it to those clergy who, snugly moored in stylish parlors, have their tables loaded with luxuries, and their curtained beds of ease; who spend their leisure hours in visiting the wealthy, the fashionable, and the gay, and enjoy themselves with much hilarity in convivial parties, and who seem never to think of the condition of the poor, the widow, and the fatherless, or of their own obligation to reform the vicious, the drunken, the profane? No, Mr. President; the public are not looking to these men for a reformation, and if they were they would look in vain; but for this great object the eyes of the public are turned to the poor, the persecuted, the indefatigable Methodist preachers, who, in their humble garb and fervent zeal, patrol your streets, and publish the glad tidings of salvation to the poor, the sick, and afflicted, and carry consolation to broken hearts and joy to mourners; who reform the vicious, the drunken, the profane,

and even carry the news of salvation into your prisons. Yes, Mr. President, these are the men to whose energetic and pious efforts the hopes and eyes of the public are now turned, and not turned in vain, for a healthy, moral, and religious influence in society; and these are the men who, by your present law, you are oppressing, persecuting, starving. The bill now before you wisely purposes to repeal that oppressive, unjust, and persecuting law. I trust that we shall act with decision, and exhibit to the public and the world an example of magnanimity of which our posterity will be proud." The final vote was taken, and the bill passed by a majority of twenty. I then said to my friends that I should like to preach on this text: "Babylon is fallen." The Methodist Church being released from this yoke of bondage, now shot ahead with great success and cheering prospects.

I will now say a few things on the subject of a comparative view of the early and present Methodism. I am aware that aged persons almost always imagine that things were doing better when they were young than when they are far advanced in life. Nevertheless I think that I can form a tolerably correct opinion on this subject. I have seen some preachers,

and some private members of our Church, who are always crying out in mournful tones: "The Church is fallen; our preachers are not near as good as we used to have;" but I have never known this plaintive sing-song to produce any good, and therefore I have no disposition to join in it. As to the early Methodist preachers, they were nearly all men of superior native intellect. This would of course be the result of the way in which they were brought into the work. A zealous minister of the Gospel goes into a neighborhood and preaches in demonstration of the Spirit and power, and persons of different sexes and ages become awakened and converted to God. The most zealous and talented among them soon begin to exhort and labor for the conversion of sinners, and encouraging their brethren in their Christian race; and these become the men whom God and the Church thrust out into the great work of saving souls. And these men are exposed to opposition and persecution which it requires much fortitude to withstand. Thus it was that those who went into the work were men of strong minds, and great fortitude, and unflinching courage; their whole souls were thrown into the work. No set of men since the apostles had probably been as much fired with a

holy zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of their fellow-men, or been as self-sacrificing, energetic, and persevering as these holy men of God. In vain were they assailed with slander; in vain were they reproached; in vain were they beaten; in vain they suffered from poverty, want, cold, and hunger. Obstacles and difficulties, which would have disheartened any other set of men, only fired them with new zeal and energy. They acted with unanimity: they were of one heart and one mind; if one suffered they all suffered; if one rejoiced they all rejoiced. It would have been strange to see two Methodist preachers meet without embracing each other most cordially in their arms. It gives me pleasure even now to think how affectionately Bishop Asbury and others used to embrace me, and how Brother Hedding and myself always met with this fraternal embrace. At the conference everything was expressive of confidence, love, and union. The membership of the Church partook strongly of the spirit of the preachers; a fervent zeal for the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, and a deep solicitude for the honor and success of Methodism, were the prominent characteristic features of the members of our Church, together with the most unlimited confidence in and

the warmest attachment to their preachers. And their love for each other was like that of the ancient Christians, when St. John said: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren;" and Julian exclaimed: "See how these Christians love each other!" I am sure that for many years I never heard one Methodist speak slightly of another. By this time it will perhaps be presumed that I think early Methodism better than it now is; but I think quite otherwise, taking it all in all. It is undoubtedly true that both preachers and people were more warmly attached to each other in the early days of our Church than they now are; not because they were more pious, but because they were less in numbers, and were persecuted much more, two circumstances which always have a strong tendency to unite persons in love.

But there are many things in which Methodism is now in a much better state than it was in its early existence. The present means of intelligence are indescribably greater than they were then. When I commenced in the ministry the Discipline and our old small Hymn book were all the Methodist books that we had. It is true that the Discipline then contained some excellent pieces, written by Mr. Wes-

ley, on points of doctrine. After a while Mr. Wesley's Notes on the New Testament came out, which were a great treat. Our religious reading, with the exception of the Bible, was almost exclusively of Calvinistic writers. A few of us got hold of the Arminian Magazine, a work of great merit, published in England by the Messrs. Wesley, and read it with great avidity. After a while Mr. Fletcher's Checks to Antinomianism, a work of very superior order on polemic divinity, and which I do not expect will ever be surpassed, was read with great attention and care, and armed all who read it with the shield of truth against all the subtle attacks of error and sophistry. The establishment of a press in this country by the Methodists was an event of great interest and benefit. But what a happy change has come over us, and how glorious is the comparison, when we consider the present state of Methodist literature in comparison with what it was fifty years ago! It was then next to nothing, and it is now, all things taken into consideration, as we think, the best in the world. It is really a matter of surprise, considering how recent the origin of the Methodist Church has been, that she has numbered among her members some of the most distinguished orators and writers on theological subjects who have

ever lived, such as the Wesleys, Fletcher, Coke, Clarke, Benson, Watson, Wood, and many others. Our periodicals are got up in the most excellent style, and are invaluable, especially as they diffuse a literary, moral, and religious taste wherever they are scattered, and with it a taste for refinement and genuine politeness. In the early days of Methodism a great portion of our school-books had a squinting at Calvinism, and the children of Methodist parents were taunted, hated, and ridiculed at the schools where they were obliged to go if they went to school at all. Now our Church abounds in high schools and colleges, from which issue many streams to make glad the city of God. These high schools and colleges are under the care of men who are distinguished for learning, talents, and piety. A very healthful religious influence is kept up in these nurseries of learning, virtue, and piety; and many young men, well qualified by their literary attainments, and yet more by divine grace and the holy unction, are coming out from these fountains of living waters, and entering the field of labor with great prospects of success and usefulness. Our conferences have been very happy in their selection of the teachers and managers of their colleges and high schools. These men have so

much at heart the glory of God and the salvation of souls, that they diffuse the same spirit and feeling into their pupils, and they in turn carry it with them wherever they scatter; and this happy influence is now being felt to a great extent throughout the country, even in the infant state of these establishments; and as they advance this gracious influence will be felt more and more in all the ramifications of society. The colleges at Delaware and Athens, in Ohio, are especially worthy of all confidence and patronage. Our institutions of learning totally refute the superstitious error that ignorance is the parent of devotion, and they establish the great truth that pure religion and morality should form the base of the superstructure of literature. It is undoubtedly true that more persons now join us without a deep concern for salvation than did in the days of persecution. But with the substantial membership of the Church, I am sure there is more deep godliness than there was in its early days. As a general thing the preachers are far more learned and quite as holy as they were then, and there has been a great improvement in the manner of carrying on revivals. On the whole, I am sure that Methodism is in a far better condition now than it was fifty years ago, and is

rapidly advancing in improvement and usefulness.

I will venture to say a few words in relation to the future prospects of Methodism. Like Amos, I can say I am neither a "prophet nor the son of a prophet;" still I think my views are justified by existing facts and circumstances. It is indeed true that almost all religious sects which have started, after flourishing for a while, have either become extinct, or have dwindled into insignificance. But there are strong reasons why this should not be the case with the Methodists. In the first place their doctrines are highly pure and evangelical, and as such will have the approbation and support of God. Again, the organization of the Methodist Church is far better and more extensive than that of other Churches. The itinerant system is greatly calculated to preserve in the Church the life and power of godliness. The human mind is fond of variety, and becomes wearied with sameness. The strictness of our Discipline will tend much to prevent the Church from falling into a state of coldness and death; our social meetings, especially class-meetings and love-feasts, have a very stirring and happy influence, and greatly tend to preserve among us an animated and lively

state of religious enjoyment; and keeping clear of the vain trappings and alluring effects of instrumental music, and other things which merely excite the fancy without producing any serious devotional feelings. The periodical meeting and the General and Annual Conferences, where there is much interchange of views and feeling, and much mutual sympathy for general good excited, all tend to preserve the unity of feeling and the bond of peace. The constant exchange of preachers among the circuits and stations keeps up that excitement and variety which is so congenial with the human mind; and especially keeping constantly before the Church that pure and apostolic doctrine that it is the duty and privilege, and should be the concern of every Christian to go on to perfection; thus stimulating to grow in grace, and above all to have a firm trust in God and his protection and care, with much fervent prayer that he will still be with us. May we not, then, confidently trust that God will add to our numbers and graces, and salvation will be our walls and bulwarks? that our banners, on which will be inscribed, "Holiness to the Lord, free grace and universal redemption," will be unfurled in every land and every clime, from the frozen region of Nova Zembla to the burning sands of the tor-

rid zone? The Methodist Church will sing the loud song of "Hosanna! blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," with glad tidings of salvation.

There is one great work in particular in which the Methodist Church is now very earnestly engaged, and which, if sincerely and humbly persevered in, will be certain to insure the protection and favor of God; it is a work in which they have taken hold with a strong grasp, and in which they are doing more, probably, in comparison with their means, than any other religious sect; a work which engaged the special care and attention of the great Redeemer while on earth; a work which will greatly extend the usefulness and influence of our Church until the arrival of the great day which shall bury the empires of the world in undistinguished ruin. I mean the great missionary work, by which the stone which was cut out of the mountain without hands shall be kept in motion till infidelity and idolatry, the crescent power, and the cruel power of the beast shall crumble before it, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our God and his Christ.

Let us here pause for a moment and take a bird's-eye view of this glorious work as commenced by this young ecclesiastical Hercules. On the western

coast of Africa and Liberia the missions of the Methodist Church are prospering, with great prospects of glorious results ; the day schools and Sabbath schools are doing well. In China their missions are in a good state of prosperity, with sanguine hopes for the future. Their missions in Germany, considering the obstacles in their way, are doing wonders ; Sunday schools prosperous. In India the opposition is great, but the Lord is opening the way, and the spirit of perseverance is pushing on the work. The Bulgarian Mission is doing very well, with flattering prospects of glorious results. The Missions in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark are very encouraging. In South America the obstacles are great, but confidence is felt of ultimate success. A mission has been commenced in the Sandwich Islands. The Indian Missions are very interesting ; this forlorn race should excite our strongest feelings of sympathy. There seems a gloomy prospect that this race of men will become extinct, there being now but a little more than three hundred thousand of them in the United States and Territories. Our missionaries are doing them immense good by civilizing and Christianizing them, and bringing them, as much as possible, to an agricultural state ; and much is being done to school their children. It

is a source of much consolation to learn, by actual facts, that they can be entirely reclaimed from the ruinous habit of intemperance. The Domestic German Mission is quite important; this is going on in a great part of the United States. It has a membership of more than sixteen thousand, with a fair proportion of traveling and local preachers, and also of houses of public worship, and week-day schools and Sunday schools. They nearly support themselves and contribute nobly to the missionary cause. Their influence is extending into Germany, and producing happy results there. The Welsh Mission is quite limited, but doing better. The English Domestic Mission is great and glorious all over the country, extending from the British dominions in North America to the Gulf of Mexico, and from the Atlantic coast to the coast of the mighty Pacific on the west. On taking a general view of this work, so great, so extensive, so glorious, the mind reverts back, and considers with surprise how recent all this is; that it is only now looking up from its cradle; and then it looks forward through a long lapse of ages and centuries yet to come, with the pleasing hope that Methodism will be the happy instrument, in the hand of God, of spreading Scripture holiness, with its pure and sublime

doctrines, through all the world. The missionary work is one of such infinite interest to the Church and the world, that nothing but a conviction of my own inability to do justice to the great cause prevents me from saying much about it.

In writing on a subject which involves the eternal interest of unnumbered millions of souls, a man should dip his pen in the fountain opened for Judah and Jerusalem, and write with thoughts that breathe and words that burn. If he would speak of it, his lips should be touched with a live coal from off the altar. The very genius of Christianity is interwoven with a missionary spirit; our blessed Saviour, in his whole ministry, was engaged in a glorious missionary work, and while yet with the disciples and preparing them, by imbuing their minds with divine truth, for the great missionary field for which he designed them, sent them, two and two, into every town and village of Judea, to preach repentance and proclaim that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. And when he gave the apostles the most splendid and important mission that was ever given to man, a mission that an archangel might have felt honored to receive, the tenor of it was: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

This great work had been nearly suspended through the indolence of the clergy and indifference of the Church; but when Mr. Wesley saw and felt the necessity of the revival of Christianity in its primeval spirit and purity, his strong mind at once grasped at the great object by the instrumentality of missions, and such being so prosperously started, we may now well indulge in the pleasing hope that it will go on and increase till the knowledge of God shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea.

CHAPTER XIII.

Effects of Preaching—Immediate Results—Presbyterian Minister at Hanging Rock—Reply to his Doctrinal Sermons—Discourse on Decrees—Possibility of falling from Grace—Christian Perfection.

I HAVE always chided myself for a want of faith in looking for a direct and immediate result of my ministerial labors. In reverting to the early Christian Church, it is observable that the preaching of the apostles produced an immediate result, as on the day of Pentecost, and at the house of Cornelius, and that of the Philippian jailer, etc., etc. It seems to me that I lack faith or faithfulness, or probably both; I know not how it is with other preachers; I hope they do not fall so far short of their duty as I do; but I have long felt very badly over this matter, and a few exceptions to this general want of proper results have even made me feel the worse, because they show what might be done. For instance, as I have already stated, the first time that I tried to preach, a very wicked man, who was a vile persecutor, was converted under the discourse.

I recollect preaching a sermon on the subject, in which I designed to point out the way of salvation in the clearest possible manner; I prefaced my discourse by stating my design, and added: "If any of you think it will be an object worthy of attention to be converted, to obtain pardon and peace here, and eternal glory hereafter, I will say to you, follow me in my discourse closely; take the steps which I shall point out, which, by the light and grace that God imparts to you, you can easily do; and, as I shall come out in my discourse, you will come out happy in religion, and in a converted state, and prepared to go on your way rejoicing."

A few years after this I fell in company with a very zealous traveling preacher, who informed me that he heard that sermon, and that when I told them how they might come out converted, he determined, by the grace of God, to try, and did so; and as I closed his burden was gone, his sins forgiven, and his soul happy. He is now successfully warning sinners to flee the wrath to come. But O my God! why is it that such cases are so rare?

A few years since, at Hanging Rock, an able and pious Presbyterian minister gave a series of discourses on doctrinal points, for the purpose of establishing

the doctrine of Calvinism. He had prepared himself well for the work; his discourses were tolerably learned and quite ingenious, and delivered with much sincerity, and enveloped in a sophism so subtle and plausible, that the error was concealed from himself and most of his hearers. I heard one of them, in which he followed in the wake of Mr. Whitefield's inextricable dilemma, namely: "That all mankind were irrecoverably lost; that if God selected out a few of them by special election and grace, it was an act of pure mercy, which did no injury to the non-elect, and left no cause of complaint." In a few minutes of conversation with him I told him that the error of his reasoning was that it did not go back far enough; it supposed that God found mankind in this lost and ruined condition, and then made the selection; whereas, according to Calvinism, God, by an eternal decree, placed them in that sinful and lost condition which was never in their power to avoid. It is well known how much the Calvinists have boasted over this fallacious argument. Mr. Whitefield put it in its strongest form, and Mr. Fletcher made a most conclusive and masterly answer, which he concluded by saying: "On the whole view of the subject, it is evident that Mr. Whitefield is much better

qualified to deliver an eloquent and pathetic discourse, or offer up a fervent prayer, than to follow the serpent of error through all his winding places, and with the thongs of truth twist him out of his lurking holes." The Methodists listened with attention to the discourses of the Presbyterian minister on the doctrines of Calvinism, and not being accustomed to making close and nice distinctions between truth and error, did not readily discover that a pill, well sugared over, might still have a bitter poison within, and began to say after all the Presbyterian minister may be in the right. I saw that the Methodist society there would probably be broken up if this matter was not attended to; I therefore made an appointment to deliver a series of discourses on doctrinal points. There was then but one meeting-house in the place, which had been built by the Presbyterians and Methodists together, and which had been used by both; but the Presbyterians had a controlling interest in it. My first discourse was in that house, and a few of the Presbyterians were out to hear me. I introduced the subject by referring to the doctrinal discourses which they had already heard. I spoke of the great regard I felt for the gentleman who had delivered them, and of the high feelings of respect I

had for the Presbyterians generally, and referred in most respectful terms to their learning and piety; that such were my feelings of kindness to them that nothing but a deep sense of duty could induce me to point out what I thought erroneous in their doctrines; but error became even more enamoring and dangerous when sustained by learned and good men; and although I could give entire assurance that I should say nothing in unkindness or severity, yet they must not expect that I would not use the most conclusive arguments that I could to sustain the truth and put down error. I then stated that I should give my first discourse on the subject of decrees, as set forth in their Confession of Faith, which confession I then read. "It is then," said I, "distinctly set forth here that God, from eternity, has foreordained or decreed all events that ever take place. But I assume it as an axiom that any doctrine which represents God's decrees and his law in direct opposition to each other, cannot be true, and this confession beyond all question does so represent it. It will of course be conceded by all that Cain's murder of Abel was a violation of God's law; then if God had decreed that Cain should murder Abel, the decree that he should murder him and the law

that he should not were in direct opposition to each other, and no sophistry can get rid of the consequence. And is it possible that any man, in possession of his reason, can swallow such an absurdity? Again, if God has decreed all things, then his decree or his law must be contrary to his will, or God must have two opposite wills; if sin is in accordance with God's will, then his law, which forbids it, must be contrary to his will; or God must have one will that man shall sin, and an opposite will that he shall not sin; no ingenuity can waive this consequence. And can any, who either love or reverence God, embrace such a shocking absurdity? Further, if God has decreed all things, then it is totally impossible for man to act in any case differently from what he does act; if he can, the decrees are a perfect nullity. And who that has any fear of God before his eyes, can say that he will consign a man to eternal torments for doing exactly what he, from eternity, decreed he should do; and what he could no more avoid doing than he could create a new world. I then showed that this doctrine of predestination utterly cuts off all the free agency of man, and all rational accountability, and even makes human legislation and courts of law a mere farce. Thus I fol-

lowed the subject in a discourse of near one hour, and although the Methodists had listened in the most quiet manner and deep attention to all that had been said on the other side, the Presbyterians would no more come to hear me, except one or two as spies, and we were not suffered to use the house any more. But we went into an old schoolhouse, where the truth could be proclaimed and understood as well as in the fine meeting-house.

My next discourse was on the doctrine of election. After apprising the audience of the subject on which I was about to address them, I said: "There is, perhaps, no other doctrine or topic in relation to Christianity which has been as little understood and as much abused as the doctrine of election. By some this has been set forth in the most heart-chilling light, as if the God of love and mercy could have made the human race with the special purpose that they should be wicked and miserable to all eternity, with the exception of comparatively a small portion, who by a decree of election were selected from the general mass of mankind for eternal life, and who should be called the elect, and who never could have been in any danger of being lost. Thus the elect would be saved, do what they would; and the reprobates, or

non-elect, would be damned, do all they could. This pernicious doctrine has been so repulsive that many benevolent and pious persons have hastily said that they did not believe the doctrine of election. But this doctrine, when rightly understood, is not only Scriptural, but very full of comfort. The Scriptures present it in a twofold light, which, for the sake of distinction, I shall, according to the learned Mr. Fletcher, call the unconditional election of grace and the conditional election of justice. By the first I mean the election of some persons to particular privileges, from which others are rejected; as Jacob rather than Esau to inherit the birthright, the tribe of Levi rather than any other to the priesthood, and that of Judah as the one in which the Messiah should come. This election is irrespective of anything which the person or persons so elected has done, can do, or ever will do. So the posterity of Abraham was elected as the peculiar people of God, as the repository of his law and ordinances; but this was not an election to eternal life, and those who were so elected might nevertheless, if they sinned, perish everlastingly. By the conditional election of justice, I mean an election to eternal life, through faith in Christ. Thus St. Paul says: 'Ye are chosen,' or

elected, (these terms mean the same,) ‘through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.’ This is an election to eternal life, and is conditional, being suspended on the condition of their believing the truth and being sanctified by the Spirit. Here, then, it will be seen that there is nothing in either of the Scriptural elections that drags after it the horrible decree of reprobation to eternal death. In short, these elections give a glorious view of the goodness of God, and afford the greatest encouragement and consolation to man.”

My next discourse was on universal redemption. On this I observed, that “this doctrine is so clearly asserted throughout the Holy Scriptures, that it is a matter of the utmost astonishment that it should ever have been called in question. St. Paul represents that when the Jews read the Scriptures there is a vail over the face, which prevents their understanding them; and really it would seem that the Calvinistic vail is so thick and dark that there is a great portion of the Scriptures which they never see. Is it possible that they have ever read from the prophet ‘that all we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us ALL.’ Have they ever read

the glorious declaration of the blessed Saviour that 'he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;' and that 'God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the *world* through him might be saved.' Query, How could the world be saved through him if he did not die to redeem the world? Have they ever heard the glad tidings of great joy, which came from heaven to all people, that to them a Saviour was born? Observe, if there were any that he did not come to redeem, could his coming be matter of great joy to them? Have they ever seen the joyful declaration that 'he is the propitiation for the sins of the *world*?' Have they ever noticed the very logical reasoning of the apostle: 'We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but to him which died for them, and rose again.' In short, have they ever seen these and many other passages equally clear in showing that God's tender mercies are over all his works, and that 'Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man.' The heart-cheering doctrine of universal redemption is set forth so strongly and clearly by the

sacred writers, that it could never have been called in question, but from the fact that the gloomy and soul-chilling doctrine of Calvinian reprobation was first embraced, and one error naturally draws others after it. Thus, when the horrid sentiment of reprobation was embraced, it was at once seen that it was irreconcilable with free grace and universal redemption, and that errors could be united to each other with more facility than error could with truth."

My next discourse was on the possibility and danger of falling from grace. I remarked that "the Calvinistic doctrine of election and reprobation necessarily drew after it a trail of errors, and among others the antisciptural doctrine of the impossibility of falling from grace, after having once obtained it, so as to perish everlastingly. The fact that some of the angels fell from their first estate, and are bound in chains of everlasting darkness, and that our first parents fell from their state of holiness into condemnation and death, seems to have no influence with those who deny the possibility of falling from grace. The Scriptures abound with cautions against falling, and the most awful threats to the righteous if they turn from their righteousness; they inform us that the promises to the righteous are conditional. 'When,'

says God, ‘I say to the righteous that he shall surely live, if he trust to his own righteousness and commit iniquity . for his iniquity that he hath committed he shall die.’ The Scriptures also say of those who have escaped from the pollutions of the world, but are again entangled and overcome thereby, that their last state is worse than the first; and that it will be better that we should never have known the way of light, than after we have known to depart from it. Even the promises of salvation are conditional, and plainly imply the danger of falling: ‘Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.’ ‘He that endureth to the end the same shall be saved.’ But all these, and a thousand other passages equally clear and plain, will have no effect upon those whose minds are poisoned with notions of antisciptural election and reprobation; but I trust they will not be wasted on you, but that you can feel the force of reason and truth.”

My next discourse was on justification; of this I well also give a synopsis: “Justification lies at the base of all practical Christianity; it is therefore of the utmost importance that this subject should be well understood. The Scriptures of divine truth give a threefold view of justification; first, by grace;

secondly, by faith; and thirdly, by works. I proceed to consider them in order. We should then recollect that all mankind were included in our first parents in their original transgression, thus all fell into a total loss of righteousness and grace; and so judgment came upon all unto condemnation; for all who are not in a state of righteousness and grace, are of consequence in a state of sin and condemnation, and of course in a propensity by nature to sin. In this condition there could be no hope to any of the human race of anything but condemnation and death, if the redemption of man had not been graciously undertaken and gloriously effected by the Son of God; but by this great work of redemption, all mankind were delivered from the condemnation of original sin, and brought into a state of initial salvation; thus Christ is the 'Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,' and is the Saviour of all men. On this subject St. Paul is extremely clear, and says: 'As by the offense of one, [Adam,] judgment came upon all men unto condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, [Christ,] the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.' You will here notice that the apostle asserts a universal justification of all men by the vicarious righteousness of Christ. Now it

never was true that all men were justified as adults ; this must, therefore, refer to them in their infant state ; hence the Saviour says of little children, without distinction or limitation, that ‘ of such is the kingdom of heaven.’ What consolation should this be to afflicted and bereaved parents when following the remains of their dear little ones to the cold and voiceless grave. This is what I term justification by grace, because it is exclusively by grace, irrespective of anything done by, or qualification in, the subject of it ; hence there is now no condemnation, except what results from actual sin, agreeably to what Christ said to the Jews : ‘ And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.’ Thus when persons commit actual sin they fall into condemnation, and in this state they are no more of the kingdom of heaven ; hence arises the necessity of being again justified ; but this cannot be like the first justification, unconditional ; neither can it be by works, for man has in this state of condemnation neither power or disposition to atone for past sins, or to do anything by nature pleasing and acceptable to God ; wherefore that he, as a sinner, is justified by faith only, without the deeds of the law, is a

most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort. In accordance with this evangelical view of the subject taken by our Church, St. Paul says: ‘Unto him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, [those who up to the moment of their justification were entirely ungodly,] his faith is counted to him for righteousness.’

“This glorious and heart-cheering doctrine of justification by faith only, without the deeds of the law, should never be lost sight of; it is the only way in which we can come, understandingly and acceptably, to God; and it is the only way in which he will accept of us, and grant us pardon and grace. ‘There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,’ but the name of Jesus Christ, and by faith in his atoning merits. This was a leading doctrine of the apostles; it lies at the foundation of Christianity, and Christianity without it would be powerless to save. It was the great theme in the Reformation under Luther, and again in that under Wesley. It has been a leading topic in our revivals, and the great secret of the wonderful success of our Church, and it will finally take the world.

I shall now proceed to consider, the subject of justification by works. Do not be startled, or

fear that I shall say anything incongruous with what I have already said. The truths of religion all harmonize. Justification by works is clearly taught in the word of God. 'Was not Abraham, our father,' says St. James, 'justified by works?' It is only necessary that we properly understand this matter, to see that the Scriptural doctrine of justification by works is in perfect unison with justification by faith, without the deeds of the law. First, then, we are justified by the condition, and secondly, by the evidence of works. We are, then, justified by the condition of works in the day of trial: 'He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved;' 'Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee a crown of life;' 'Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you;' 'As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me;' 'By thy words shalt thou be justified;' 'Be not high-minded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, [the Jews,] take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, [the Jews,] severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.' These and a thousand other passages of Scripture establish

the fact, most conclusively, that we are justified by the condition of works in the day of trial. But this is in perfect harmony with the doctrine of justification by faith only, as already established. Now mark well : If faith could be genuine, that is, if it could remain the true saving faith of the Gospel, without corresponding works, then, and in that case, works would not be at all necessary to continue in a state of justification, for there is nothing in the nature of works which make them indispensable to salvation. This is evident from the case of the thief on the cross. But a true and living faith is indispensable to salvation ; and this faith is not a dead or dormant principle, but is living and active, producing its fruits of love, kindness, benevolence, etc., etc. As the apostle says, it works by love and purifies the heart ; and the Saviour says, ‘ By their fruits ye shall know them.’ Faith is the root and stem of the tree of life. But the Scriptures not only teach that good works—that is, living soberly, righteously, and godly—are the condition of justification here ; but they also teach the doctrine of justification by the evidence of works in the day of judgment. Our blessed Saviour, in describing the awfully solemn and deeply interesting process of that day, says : ‘ Hereafter shall ye see the

sign of the Son of man, [probably the cross,] coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory : and before him shall be gathered all nations : and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats : and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world : for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took me in : naked, and ye clothed me : I was sick, and ye visited me : I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'”

I have made the quotation at large because it is so very important, and puts this subject in so clear a light. It must not be supposed that the righteous are

admitted to the kingdom by any merits of their works of piety and faith ; but these works are the evidence that they were the true followers of Christ, and possessed the true faith which works by love, consequently they are there justified by the evidence of works. Considering, then, how clear and plain the Scriptures are on the subject of justification in the various views in which I have presented it, is it not surprising that so much darkness and error should have prevailed on this subject, and that the anti-nomians and Pelagians should have fallen into errors of such opposite extremes? Reviewing the whole subject, some important inferences very naturally present themselves to the mind. First, then, if the doctrine of justification by grace, which I hope I have established beyond doubt, be true, then the Calvinian doctrine of election and reprobation and limited redemption cannot be true ; for if it be a fact that by Christ the free gift came upon all men unto justification, then Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man, and God has never ordained an unborn soul to everlasting woe. Again, if the doctrine of justification by faith be true ; that is to say, if, after we fall into condemnation by actual sin, we cannot then obtain justification in any way but by faith in

Christ, then it follows that Universalism cannot be true. Moreover, if the doctrine of justification by the condition of works in the day of trial, be true, than which nothing can be more certain, then the doctrine of unconditional perseverance, that is, that we cannot fall from grace, must necessarily be erroneous.

“I will now,” said I, “address you on the last topic which I have purposed to consider in this series of discourses, namely, that of Christian Perfection. This doctrine is almost peculiar to the Methodists; some of the minor sects receive it, but most of them not only reject, but even treat it with ridicule. It is important that this subject should be well understood; we do not mean angelic nor Adamic perfection, nor do we mean a perfection of knowledge or judgment; but we mean simply being cleansed from all sin by the blood of Christ, and having the perfect love to God and man shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us, which casts out all fear. We believe that when awakened sinners are converted to God, and pass from death to life, they are then brought into a state of justification, and they are filled with joy and peace in believing in Jesus; but they are not yet holy, sanctified, and

gone on to perfection; that there is yet a much higher state of holiness which they may attain, and to which they should go on, and for which they should constantly hunger and thirst; that all relapses and backslidings are occasioned by neglecting this; and if this doctrine was believed in by all Christians, and all of them in deep earnest entered into the practical benefit of it, the Church would present a very different aspect to the world from what it now does, and her influence would be great and powerful; she would come up from the wilderness fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. But do the Scriptures give us any assurance that such a state of holiness and happiness is attainable in this life? They do unmistakably give us such assurance. St. Paul says to the Corinthians, ‘Farewell, be perfect;’ and Christ says, ‘Be ye perfect;’ and the first and great commandment enjoins us to love the Lord our God with all the heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, that is, with a perfect love; and will any dare say that God commands us to do what he never enables us to do? Again, the Scriptures teach us to pray for this blessing; the Saviour, in that inimitable prayer which he has taught us to use, directs us to say, ‘Deliver us from

evil. This cannot imply less than to be saved from all sin, the greatest of all evil. St. Paul says to the Thessalonians: 'I pray God that your whole soul, and body, and spirit be preserved blameless;' and also prays that they may be sanctified wholly; and again he prays that his brethren may be filled with the fullness of God; and of course there would be no room left for sin, but it would be the very highest state of Christian perfection. Now, candidly, I would like to know whether those who contend so zealously for indwelling sin do, or do not, pray to God to deliver them from it; in other words, deliver them from evil. Furthermore, this great blessing is promised. God says to his humble followers: 'I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you.' St. John says: 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;' and 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.' Will the pleaders for sin please to inform us how much sin remains when we are cleansed from all sin. St. Paul says to those who had arrived at mature Christianity: 'Being made free from sin, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the

end everlasting life.' Query again : ' When we are made free from sin, are we in bondage to it ? ' Finally, there are examples of perfection given : ' There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job ; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil.' Hezekiah ' walked before God with a perfect heart.' St. Paul says : ' Let us, as many as are perfect, be thus minded.' Now, in all seriousness and candor, I would ask, How is it possible for persons professing to believe the Bible to deny a doctrine so fully, so clearly, and distinctly contained in it ? But it is objected that it would make us proud. Impossible, for it is perfect humility. But sin, it is said, is necessary to keep us humble ; then the devil must be very humble, for he is an old sinner. But we should not feel our dependence on Christ ; but it is perfect dependence on Christ ; its feeling is,

' Every moment, Lord, I need
The merit of thy death.'

But we should have no warfare, no tribulation, no alluring world ; and there would be no room to grow in grace. But this state is a healthy, perfect growing in grace ; the more grace we have the more we

can grow in grace ; the saints in glory will no doubt grow in grace and holiness to all eternity.

Before dismissing this subject let us take one more view of it. It is agreed by all that we must, in some way be cleansed from all sin before we can enter heaven, and various methods have been conceived by which this may be done. The Restorationists believe that impure souls must go to hell and spend a long apprenticeship there, to become purified and fit for heaven. Mr. Winchester, the leader of this sect, says that they would remain in hell, which, he taught, was a literal lake of fire and brimstone, forty-nine thousand years, at which time they would be sufficiently purified to go up to heaven. But really I should think they would carry with them a bad odor. The Catholics believe that departed souls go to purgatory, which is, I suppose, a kind of ante-chamber to hell, where they will be purified ; and by the benefit of the prayers of the priest (especially if he is well paid for it) the souls will be brought out and admitted into heaven. And really it seems to me that those Protestants who contend that the blood of Christ cannot cleanse us from all sin in this life, must rely on death to do it, which is more absurd than either of the other purgatories. Death was produced by

sin; and will death destroy the cause which produced it?" I then gave a discourse of recapitulation, reviewing the whole ground, and impressing the principal arguments on the memory. I was happy to learn by the testimony of our friends, and by a good revival which followed, that I had not labored in vain.

CHAPTER XIV

Address to Members of the Church — Statistics — Signs of the Times —
 What most needed — Great Object of Methodism — An Incident —
 Good Motto — Necessity of Union — Support of the Ministry — Benef-
 icence — Luxuries — Needless Self-indulgences — Ways of Usefulness
 opened — Prosperity of the Church.

I WILL now beg leave to address the membership of
 the Methodist Episcopal Church.

MY DEAR BRETHREN: With hesitancy I approach
 you. I know that you have many excellent teachers,
 but you have not many fathers. Methodism had its
 first rise and entire progress in the United States in
 my time. I was born a few years after Bishop Asbury
 first came to establish Methodism this side of the At-
 lantic, and now the Church numbers in her member-
 ship near one and a half millions, besides those who
 call themselves the Protestant Methodists, True Wes-
 leyans, etc., all of which have grown out of the general
 work; and besides this, there are immense numbers
 who have been awakened and converted through the
 labors of the Methodists, and have united with other

Churches, all of which would probably swell their whole number to two millions; and if we add to these the great multitudes converted by the labors of the Methodist preachers who have passed over Jordan, what a host in the ranks of the militant Church would it exhibit; and there are about eight thousand five hundred traveling preachers, and more than one thousand six hundred local preachers in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, most of whom are no doubt deeply devoted to the work of God. I can hardly forbear the reflection that if we were all as earnestly engaged for the glory of God and the salvation of souls as we should be, the world could hardly stand before us. If we are faithful unto death, how shall we swell the sacramental host of God's elect around the throne of glory! I have called your attention to these statistics for the purpose of paving the way to some things which I wish to say. I have lived nearly through a long life, having seen the frosts of seventy-six winters.

I have endeavored to be a close observer of men and things, and if I have any correct judgment of the signs of the times, it is not only true that we are now living in a very interesting epoch of the Church and the world, but that we are on the eve of events of

great moment. Besides the wonderful occurrences which have taken place in the Church in my time, very great political changes have followed in rapid succession among the nations of the earth, and the arts and sciences have advanced with a most astonishing rapidity. It is then manifest that you live in an important age of the Church and the world, and that important duties are urgently pressed upon you.

When the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us," came to St. Paul in a vision, it imposed new duties upon him. So when events pregnant with great results are passing before you, they call upon you to be co-workers with God, that these results may be happy and glorious.

In the first place, then, what is always most needed is deep holiness of heart and life. Never lose sight of the great object of the first start of Methodism—to spread scriptural holiness through the land. There is no doubt but your enjoyment and influence will be in proportion to your holiness; religious enjoyments and a high state of grace are always inseparable; if you are not going on to perfection you are receding. This is undoubtedly the reason why so many Churches have started and run well for a season, and then gone entirely back to the weak and beggarly elements of

the world, or at best have fallen into a Laodicean state of lukewarmness. You have great reason to congratulate yourselves that you have a membership in a Church where you are taught that it is your privilege to be sanctified wholly, and to be filled with the fullness of God, and be cleansed from all sin by the blood of Christ; and that, being made free from sin, you have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. But this heart-cheering and soul-reviving doctrine should not remain in theory only, but you should be in deep earnest to go on to perfection, in which state you will be safer, happier, and more useful.

I will illustrate this by an incident related to me by an excellent presiding elder of the North Ohio Conference. A pious and worthy woman, a member of our Church, thought it her duty to go to a certain man in her neighborhood, who was a man of standing and influence, and exhort him to seek salvation. He listened attentively while she said to him: "Sir, you may think me enthusiastic, but I have for some time felt much concern for your salvation, and thought it my duty to come and speak to you on the subject. I noticed that in your business transactions you display a good degree of wisdom and talent, and

I am surprised that this does not serve you in the far more important matter of your salvation." "Madam," said he, "I do not think that your course manifests any enthusiasm. I have wondered that Christians do not manifest more concern for the spiritual welfare of their neighbors; but I think you are a Methodist." "Yes, sir, I am!" "Well, you express a surprise that having, as you seem to think, a tolerable talent for business, I should neglect the more important concerns of salvation; but tell me, do not the Methodists believe that they can attain perfect love?" "We do so believe." "May I ask if you have it?" "I have not." "If you neglect that, why be surprised that I neglect the interests of salvation?" "Sir, I feel the force of what you say. I hope we shall both do better. Good morning, sir; God bless you!" She returned home, went to her closet, and bowed before God, exclaiming like Jacob: "Lord, I will not let thee go except thou bless me." She hungered, thirsted, prayed, agonized, believed, and the Saviour filled her heart with perfect love; and in the fullness of her joy she returned to the man, told him what God had done for her, and of the unction of grace; she exhorted him most importunately to seek the Lord; the word was quick and

powerful ; he was pricked to the heart, and earnestly sought the pearl of great price, and did not seek it in vain, but became a worthy member of the Church, and a partaker of the grace of God.

Follow the example of that worthy sister. Let us, by the blessings of divine grace, evince to all in the most successful way that we are right in adopting the motto of "Holiness to the Lord."

"Ye different sects, who all declare,
'Lo! here is Christ, or Christ is there,'
Your stronger proofs divinely give,
And show me where the Christians live."

It has often been said that if anything should be done at all it should be done well. This is strictly true in relation to being religious. If there are any good and sufficient reasons why we should be religious at all, (and they are perfectly overwhelming,) the same reasons show that we should be deeply and thoroughly imbued with it in the whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, and so live that we may

"Nightly pitch our moving tent
A day's march nearer home."

I will now call your attention to some thoughts on the necessity of union. Disunion has been the bane

of Churches and states. If you love God and his cause, the Church and your country, and I am sure you love them all, by all means do everything in your power to cultivate and strengthen the spirit of harmony and union in our Church. Some have gone off under the name of Protestant Methodist, True Wesleyans, etc. I would not speak unkindly of them, but I think they would have done much more good if they had continued with us in the bonds of peace and union. It sometimes happens that a preacher has an itching to become the leader of a sect. If you discover anything like this give them no countenance. By all proper means promote a feeling of kindness and brotherly love. And this should not only be done as a general thing, but it should be done in all of our societies and classes. In the whole time of my ministry of fifty-seven years, slander, evil-surmising, and evil-speakings have brought more scandal, trials, and troubles into the Church than all other causes put together. It will sometimes happen that a trifling person, raised to some consequence by membership in the Church, will in this way get a whole society into ferment and confusion, and do more evil in a short time than a faithful minister of God can do good in many months.

Tale-bearers seem to be the most appropriate agents for the devil that he has ever found. I know of no terms sufficiently opprobrious to convey a just sense of the enormity of this sin; and yet many who would be shocked at the idea of stealing will be guilty of slander, in comparison with which stealing is a saintly virtue. Who is there that would not far rather be robbed of their money than of their character?

“He who steals my purse steals trash :
 ’Twas mine, ’tis his, and has been slave to thousands :
 But he who filches from me my good name
 Robs me of that which not enriches him,
 But makes me poor indeed.”

Some will excuse themselves by saying, “I did not originate the story, I only told what I heard;” but he who shall receive and pass on stolen goods is equally guilty with the thief.

There is one subject more to which I wish to call your particular attention, that is, the support of your preachers. And I can speak with more freedom on this subject, because I have no interest at stake but such as is common to you all. Recollect that your preachers are engaged in a work as glorious as that of any set of men since the apostolic age, and that any-

thing which you can do to forward this great work will entitle you to the same reward as those who are more exclusively engaged in it. The blessed Saviour says that he who "shall receive a prophet [sustain him as such] in the name of a prophet, shall have a prophet's *reward*." Instead of engaging in this work grudgingly, you ought to consider yourselves very highly honored that you are permitted to have a part in a work so glorious. The time will come when the remembrance of the most humble effort to promote the cause of God will afford you more joy than all of your unavailing toils for worldly wealth and glory. Your preachers are nearly all poor; they use the utmost economy; their furniture and equipage is all cheap, and their tables are very frugal; their garments often threadbare, and their families clad in the cheapest style; and yet they are so hard pushed that many are obliged to locate, and that under circumstances which often embarrass them for life; and when they do not locate their minds are hard pressed, insomuch as to injure their influence. What painful sensations often oppress their minds while enjoying a rich repast at your sumptuous tables; they are thinking of the penury and wants of their beloved wives and children, who may be going to

bed hungry and supperless. And yet these preachers have talents and intelligence to go to worldly business with good prospects of success. Your preachers labor and toil for your benefit to the full extent of their strength, and often, by going beyond it, break down their constitutions, and spend the remainder of their lives in feeble health and sickness, and to all these sufferings you add that of extreme and suffering poverty. In the great work of regenerating the world, very much depends on your efforts to support those who are directly engaged in it. It is true that in general you are not wealthy; but if your hearts are truly in it you can do considerable in this glorious work, notwithstanding your moderate circumstances. If you are a mechanic, allot a few days of your earnings to support the Gospel, and you may rest assured that you will not be poorer for it. If you are a business man, allot a certain, though it be a small, per centage of your profits for that purpose. If a farmer, lay off a small piece of ground, put in it a profitable crop, and let that crop go to support the cause of God. If you are a herdsman, let the fleece of a few of your sheep, or some other portion of the profit of your herds, be set apart to support the Gospel. If you will try some such

systematic course, I think it certain that you will prosper more, and enjoy life better, and have a rich treasure laid up in heaven. "Bring in," says God, "your tithes and offerings into my storehouse, and try me, and prove me, and see if I do not open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room to receive it." Again, most of you might make a curtailment of expenditures not only without injury, but even with benefit to yourselves and families. I hope, to be sure, that none of you have any expenses for the ruinous purpose of using intoxicating drinks. But I am sure, from observation, that many of you are in the habit of using that strong narcotic, unhealthy, and filthy weed, tobacco, and some of you to a great extent. A very reliable gentleman told me the other day that he knew a man, who was a member of our Church, who paid away nearly sixty dollars a year for cigars. The use of this weed, to say the least, is an expensive, filthy, and unhealthy practice, and a needless self-indulgence. Now by quitting totally this bad practice, you will derive a benefit to your health and comfort, and save a considerable amount, which you can appropriate for the support of the Gospel without any additional embarrassment. Many of you keep

tables loaded with luxuries beyond the necessary demands of nature, and pernicious to health. Now then, by curtailing your table expenses, you and your families will have better health, and you will thereby be enabled to contribute largely for the support of your preachers, and the advance of Zion's cause.

There are many other luxuries which may be abridged without any detriment, and which will enable you to do much for the great interests of religion. In short, if you become deeply interested in the great object of sustaining those who are devoting their lives to the glorious work of publishing the glad tidings of salvation, the way to do it will be opened before you. With me it has been a subject of particular observation, that our members who do most to support the Gospel generally prosper best, both temporally and spiritually. See then that your preachers are so sustained that they will not be in a state of anxiety about the poverty and suffering of their families, nor be driven from the itinerancy for want of support; and they will feel a new courage and vigor in preaching the Gospel, which will form a new and happy era in the prosperity of our Church, and you will be filled with joy in view of the happy change. Remember, the Lord loves the cheerful

giver, and those who sow bountifully shall also reap bountifully. The time will come when the remembrance of efforts to promote the work of God, the great interest of the Church, and the salvation of souls, will afford you far more consolation than all that you have done for the world.

CHAPTER XV

The Itinerancy — Great Work — Responsibilities — Wesley — Results —
Pastoral Visitation — Address — Local Preachers — Trials.

MY DEARLY-BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE ITINERANCY,—
I wish to say a few things to you for your encouragement in the great and arduous work in which you are engaged ; but I feel much deference in approaching you, and should feel myself honored and happy in receiving instruction from you. But will you suffer my age, (being now seventy-six,) and my long labors as an humble preacher of the Gospel in the service of our Church for fifty-seven years, to apologize for my thus addressing you ?

I shall soon lay down my charge, my life, and my trials here, and go, I humbly trust, by the grace of God, to join those champions of the cross with whom I once labored in the field of battle hand to hand and shoulder to shoulder, in evil report and in good report, as poor, yet making many rich in the cause of our common Lord. And now, if I can in any

measure succeed in encouraging you in your labors of love, I shall be happy in the thought that when I am dead I shall yet speak. For your encouragement, then, suffer me to remark that no set of men since the apostles have ever been so successfully engaged in a work of such deep interest to the Church and the world as that which occupies your attention and engages your efforts. The Reformation under Luther was a grand and important one, and pregnant with great events; but that, for the most part, was more a change of doctrine than of life, a reformation of the head more than of the heart. This is evident from the fact that as soon as they thought they were sufficiently strong to defend their right by the sword they resorted to it.

But the Reformation under Wesley was a purely spiritual work, a work of the heart, turning the people from their sins to serve the living and true God, not to spread military conquests, but "*holiness through the land.*" In this great work, then, gird on the armor, and equip yourselves for the fight. It is true that you sometimes meet with difficulties and discouraging circumstances, your labors are not appreciated, your motives are misrepresented, and you witness the coldest ingratitude from those whose

benefit you had zealously toiled to promote ; but suffer none of these things to chill the ardor of your zeal ; put your trust in God, go forward, and fear no evil, for in due season you shall reap if you faint not. You often feel oppressed and discouraged because the Church leaves you and your families to suffer from poverty and want, but this is not so much from avarice as from inattention ; and I know well the difficulty of overcoming the delicacy of your feelings to let your friends know your wants. But, for the sake of the great work and the salvation of souls, you should do it. Besides, how trifling is the endurance of any supportable poverty in view of the ultimate reward. It is not dollars, but crowns, that you are laboring to obtain, as Mr. Wesley says :

“Riches unsearchable
 In Jesus' love we know,
 And pleasures from the well
 Of life our souls o'erflow :
 On all the groveling kings of earth
 With pity we look down,
 And claim, in virtue of our birth,
 A never-fading crown.

If you were to grow weary in well-doing, and faint in the work, what gloomy prospects would hang over the Church and the world ! To what other agency

could they look for evangelizing the nations of the earth? We rejoice that our sister Churches are doing good even on a limited scale; but what other Church is there which has as broad, extensive, energetic, and systematic plan of itinerancy, by which this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations? If you were to desert the field, a darkness far worse than that of Egypt would brood over it. Our Church, as you know, has received that apostolic doctrine so cheering to the true believer, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from *all sin*, and perfect love, casts out all fear. Now it is of the utmost importance for our enjoyment and our usefulness that we should possess the full blessedness of this perfect love, and be wholly sanctified. In short, that we should live and preach holiness in heart and life, let holiness to the Lord be your motto.

Suffer me respectfully to suggest one thing more. It has long appeared to myself that the habit of making religious visits from house to house promises more for the usefulness of the minister of the Gospel than anything else. Let this be gone into in good earnest, and in entering a house do not attempt to pave the way by any general remark on the weather, the news of the day, etc., but come at once

to the point; get the family together, earnestly exhort them to seek salvation, and fervently pray with and for them. It will be a great benefit to them and yourself too.

To the local preachers I beg leave to say a few words. One who has been in your ranks for more than half a century hopes that you will be willing to listen to a few suggestions from him. Our labors and our means of doing good in the Gospel field are much less than those of the traveling preachers, but that is no good reason why we should be idle, and not do all we can. Local preachers can do much as auxiliaries to those who have charge of stations and circuits. First, then, let us realize that the most important qualification is, that our hearts be deeply imbued with the spirit of divine grace, inspiring us with a holy unction in proclaiming the word of life; without this we shall be like sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, but with it we may be useful even with very limited talents. And by this we may be able to say to our brethren, "Follow me as I follow Christ." Again, we should be industrious. We can almost always find places where they are destitute of Sabbath preaching, and where we can be acceptable and useful. It is also of much importance that we do all in our power

to hold up the hands of the preachers in charge, encourage and strengthen them, and excite the people with a feeling of confidence in them, and render them all the assistance we can in their protracted meetings, etc. It is especially incumbent on us, as far as possible, to preserve the peace and harmony of our societies; and, above all, keep entirely aloof from all slander and evil speaking ourselves. In short, let us humbly and faithfully serve God and the Church, resting assured that God will not forget our labors of love.

Before I close I wish to address a few thoughts to mothers. I never reflect on your situation without strong feelings of interest and sympathy. You have a great deal of toil, suffering, and pain to endure, and often have but little sympathy or care for your relief. Men, in their disposition of haughtiness and tyranny, have left females in a state of servitude, toil, and degradation, especially in heathen and savage countries, which has greatly augmented their sufferings, while they seem to think that females are made for no other purpose than to serve their haughty masters. In all countries where Christianity prevails the condition of females is comparatively good, and the more so in proportion to the prevalence of Christianity. It

is then in the power of the fair sex, and especially mothers, very greatly to increase the influence of that pure religion by which their condition can be made comfortable and happy here and glorious hereafter. First, then, you should be truly pious, in view of the great benefits which you derive from the influence of our holy religion. It would be shocking in you not to be truly devout. Recollect that you have a most controlling influence over your children. You are with them from their birth. They are entirely dependent on you as they advance in life. Your word is their law. In their view you are infallible. They place entire reliance on what you say, and hence it is that by living piously yourself, and teaching your children so to do, you will see the fulfillment of that declaration of divine truth : "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." If you would not be religious for your own sake, you certainly should for the sake of your children. You have given them an existence which they can never escape, and which must be one of indescribable happiness or of inconceivable misery to all eternity ; and much, very much, depends on you which it shall be. In my time I have attended hundreds of love-feasts, and I have always noticed that it

is a very common thing to hear persons speak of their mother's influence being, under God, the cause of their conversion. But it is very seldom we hear them attribute it to the influence of their father. There is no other portion of the community, except, perhaps, the preachers of the Gospel, on which the Church and the public are as much dependent for a good state of religion and society as on you. And even the preachers of the Gospel could effect but little without your co-operation. Recollect that by bringing up your children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," you will not only lay the foundation for them to be a comfort to you in your advanced life, and be the means of their salvation, and the prosperity of the Church, and a happy state of society, but you will be securing to your sex that great source of respect and kindly regard which can only be secured by the benign influence of Christianity. Are not these great and overwhelming motives sufficient to induce you to take the correct course? and besides all this, your own present and eternal happiness is at stake. I feel the more in earnest in persuading you to a right course, because, if this is done, it will be an immeasurable benefit to society in all its ramifications. Think, then, what a great responsibility is

upon you. Teach your children the knowledge of God, his love to the world, the coming of the Saviour, the glorious work of redemption, and the way of salvation by faith in Christ; teach them to pray, and how. In short, do all in your power to lead them on with you to the kingdom of God. And think how joyful it will be to meet them in paradise, never to part again.

CHAPTER XVI.

Object of Life — Address to Young Men — An Interesting Age — Great Advantages — Counsel — Fashionable Vices — Matrimony — Religion.

A good writer has said that “to spend life aright we should, when young, consider that we may one day be old; and when old, remember that we were once young.” I have endeavored to do this, and it has given me a feeling of deep solicitude for young men. I hope, therefore, that you will suffer one far advanced in life to approach you as a father, in terms and with feelings of kindness.

You live in an interesting age of the world, and probably on the verge of great events. You also have your life and time in a country which, on the whole, in view of its liberties, both civil and religious, and its privileges, is the most enviable of any on the face of the earth; a country rapidly advancing in population, science, and wealth; and it depends very much on you whether it shall continue this glorious course, or recede from it, and sink into degradation

and ruin; and if, while I linger on these mortal shores, I can by any means stir you up to a patriotic, honorable, and virtuous course, which shall at once contribute to your own and your country's benefit, I shall feel happy, and it will afford me consolation when I shall recline my weary head in the last lingering moments of life on the pillow of death.

Your fathers are passing in rapid succession to that land from whence no traveler returns, and you must soon fill their places. Yes, you must soon be the legislators, the civilians, and sit on the judge's bench to expound the law and administer justice; yea, more, on you the Church must depend to proclaim the everlasting Gospel, and marshal on the host of God's elect to eternal glory. And besides all this, the great agricultural, commercial, and manufacturing interests strongly require deep science and correct principles to insure their success and prosperity. Suffer me, then, to urge you to be assiduous in improving your means for the acquisition of useful knowledge. To be sure, most of you have not the advantages, so highly to be prized, of colleges and seminaries of learning; but still you may, by a proper application of your time and means, acquire a great amount of the most useful knowledge. Doubtless

you have heard of the *learned blacksmith*. A brother-in-law of mine, Dr. Butler, had no advantages of schooling beyond that of a common district school in Vermont, in his boyhood, and yet he became a great adept in learning. He was profound in mathematics, astronomy, history, moral and natural philosophy, deep in theology, and read the Scriptures in nine different languages. Bishop Hedding's early advantages for literary acquirements were extremely limited. After he had preached for some time I taught him in mathematics and grammar. And yet he became a first-rate theologian and elegant scholar. Let it not be inferred from this that any should neglect the great advantages of high schools of learning who can have them, but if they cannot let them not despair, but apply themselves with indomitable perseverance to obtain a good fund of useful knowledge. Never be ashamed to expose your ignorance when it is necessary as the means of becoming intelligent.

The love of your country, its form of government, and its institutions, should be deeply fixed in your mind; and here recollect that no man can truly love his country, himself, or his God, who is immoral and vicious. You should by all means consider it indispensable that your minds should be deeply imbued

with correct principles, and that your habits should be in perfect accordance with such principles. And here I think it in place to say that Christianity contains incomparably the best system of ethics which has ever been published to the world. As samples, read the Lord's Sermon on the Mount, the twelfth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, the Epistle of St. James, etc. Do your duty toward God by loving, reverencing, and serving him, and toward yourself by the strict observance of all the rules of temperance, industry, purity, and virtue, which contribute to peace of mind and health of body; and to others by justice, benevolence, and kindness.

Be very particular in the selection of your company. Much of the good or evil of life depends on this. "Evil communications corrupt good manners: and a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Whatever value you place on yourself society will place on you. If you adopt as your companions the vulgar and vicious, society will take it for granted that there is your proper level and place, and there they will keep you. But if they see that you will adopt none as your associates but the intelligent and virtuous, they will of course presume that there is your proper place, and treat you accordingly.

In relation to your habits, suffer me to refer to a circumstance of my early life which to me has, I am sure, been of great benefit. I wrote down a set of resolutions for the government of myself in after life, one of which was, that, whatever I might do from the impulse of momentary excitement, I never would habitually do anything which I could not justify on correct principles. If you will adopt this resolution, and stick well to it, you will derive much consolation from it in the evening of life. It has, by the grace of God, preserved me from all kinds of intemperance, and now that I am seventy-six years of age my appetite is as good as it was in early life. I relish my food, fruit, etc., as well, and sleep as well as I then did, and am no more subject to sickness, aches, and pains, than I was then; and I attribute this in great measure to my adopting and observing this resolution.

I wish now to call your attention to some particular things. And, first, always treat your parents with great respect, affection, and kindness. Do all in your power to smooth for them the downhill path of life. You owe to them a great debt of gratitude, which you can never fully repay; and recollect that you, in your turn, may be blessed with sons, and the

measure which you meet shall be measured to you again.

Again, let your habits be strictly temperate, and never use the fatal cup of intoxication. At the time of the greatest success of the temperance societies I felt strong hopes that the temperance cause might be pushed to a successful and final triumph, and that intemperance, with all its frightful train of evils, might be banished from society. But, alas! a gloomy change has come over the prospect, and we are oppressed with the mournful thought that drunkenness, with its horrible train of domestic and social woes, and the unparalleled sufferings of its wretched victims in the poverty, shame, sickness, crime, and death which it entails, is to return, and God only knows when and how it will be checked.

This dark prospect increases your danger, and makes it doubly necessary that you should be fixed in your purpose to touch not, taste not, and handle not the poisonous and deadly beverage, which is far more fatal than the ill-famed upas-tree. No wretchedness this side of hell can compare with that of a victim of intemperance. The perfect slave of an uncontrollable and vicious appetite, he is drawn into the periphery of a deadly whirlpool, where he passes round

and round, constantly drawing nearer and nearer to the awful vortex. Occasionally he becomes alarmed, looks around, makes a feeble but ineffectual struggle, passes on in the same fatal whirl, till, coming into the awful vortex, he utters a despairing shriek, and down, down he goes, never to return. Take warning while you may, for if the inebriatory habit is once fixed, an angel might raise his warning voice in vain. The guileful charms of the subtle serpent is not more fatal on the ensnared bird, than the social glass in a circle of young men.

How often have I seen young men reared in the lap of fortune, well educated, having fond and indulgent parents, surrounded by kind friends, but influenced by pleasing company and a fondness for hilarity, indulge in pressing the bewitching cup to the lips; and soon, alas! all is lost. An appetite is formed, for the indulgence of which property, friends, health, and even life is sacrificed. Were it not that the limits which I must observe for this brief address preclude it, I would give some startling instances of ruin, illustrating these melancholy facts. But it is much to be regretted that too many of these are vividly pictured on the minds of all. Beware of the *first glass*!

There is another vice into which young men are too apt to be drawn, scarcely less fatal in its effects than that which has just been considered. It is fashionable, assumes an air of politeness, ease, and *sang froid*, and makes pretensions to belonging to high life. I mean that of *gambling*. This pernicious habit prevails to an alarming extent, and is often productive of the most frightful evils. Laws have often been passed to check this vice, but it is usually carried on in such a way that it is very difficult to reach it by the law. Hence the populace have sometimes in desperation applied lynch law.

Gamblers are perfectly heartless, being entirely regardless of the poverty and wretchedness they impose on their victims. Infant male children, who are born to fortunes, are marked as their victims; and as they advance in life every stratagem is used to excite in them a rage for gambling, and they are made to believe, finally, that they have become accomplished in the art; and when their fortune falls into their hands they are led on to bet on their skill on the ace, and care being taken to have the bets small, they are suffered to win till they get such confidence in their own adroitness that they will throw their whole

fortune at one stake, and it is swept from them, and the poor victims are left to a life of wretchedness.

All crime leads to misery, and gambling in particular. Some years since a notorious gambler in the northerly part of Kentucky, in an affray was mortally wounded, and before his death he told a friend of mine that he had always been miserable since he commenced gambling. The greatest gambler in the world, who sometimes made feasts which cost him thousands of pounds, in order to bring in gamblers from distant parts, a while since died of starvation in an obscure lane in London. When families who have been in flourishing circumstances, are at once reduced to extreme poverty by gambling, and without means, and without knowing how to labor, are thrown upon a cold-hearted world, how indescribably wretched is their condition.

Gambling is a frightful source of suicide. A worthy gentleman told me that, when taking passage on a steamboat, he saw a young man of fine appearance solicited to take a card at a gambling table, but refused. He then approached the young man and congratulated him on the circumstance. He replied by saying: "Before I left home my mother strongly admonished me not to gamble."

Yet in a short time he was prevailed on to take a card; he was at first successful on small sums, but finally lost all his money, and last of all the gold watch which his mother gave him as a keepsake, and, to close the horrid tragedy, he leaped overboard and was seen no more.

A few years since a young man married a daughter of a wealthy gentleman in Virginia, and shortly after the nuptials were celebrated her father gave him twenty thousand dollars to go to Richmond and purchase furniture. Some gamblers learning that he had this money, by stratagem drew him into their vortex, took all his money, and when his happy and beautiful young bride was looking for his return with the elegant furniture, she received a note from him informing her of the facts, and saying that he could not see her again under such circumstances, and added that his pistol was loaded, by which he should blow out his brains as soon as that note was mailed, which he accordingly did.

The History of the Police of Europe, a large octavo volume of much merit, stated that in Paris alone thousands of suicides are annually caused by gambling. But it would take a volume to record the horrible results of this nefarious practice. An inter-

esting work on this subject has been published by Mr. Green, a reformed gambler. This work ought to be in the hands of every young man in the country. Gambling is a leading vice, and is like the demoniac mentioned in the Gospel, whose name was *Legion*. It always draws after it a host of vices. As you value everything which should be dear to you, shun all the haunts of gambling as you would a den of poisonous serpents.

Suffer me to say a few words to you on the necessity of shunning forever the use of profane language. I would hope, indeed, that no one who reads this address is so vulgar as to use it; but as I know that some persons who lay some claims to a right in good society do use it, I will call your attention to the subject. I cannot feel for persons who fall into this vice the sympathy I do for victims of other vices, where there is some tempting bate to allure and draw them on. In profane swearing there is no honor, profit, or pleasure. The profane swearer is therefore vicious.

Without a temptation I never thought of using a profane word in my life, and never saw the time but what it filled me with disgust and horror. How any

person ever came to begin to use it I cannot conceive. It is an outrage on the feelings of all persons of good morals and correct habits. I have said to profane men, "Sir, if I were constantly to abuse the character of your father and mother, would you not consider it an outrage on your feelings?" "Certainly I should." "Well, suffer me to inform you that you are in the habit of blaspheming the name of my God and Saviour, far more dear to me than your earthly parents are to you." I have mentioned this to show in a proper light the rudeness of the profane.

Profanity is a violation of all the rules of politeness; it is a violation of all the rules of syntax. Profane persons are disgusted with each other, and profanity destroys self-respect. It is a sin of deep dye against God, and one that he will punish with awful severity. Washington, the distinguished father of his country, has said that profane swearing is more inexcusable than any other crime. A staff officer of the Revolutionary army told a friend of mine that the most mortifying occurrence of his life was when, dining with Washington and his staff, he uttered an oath, and Washington looked on him with a mingled air of authority and disgust, and said: "I had supposed that I had none but gentlemen at my table."

“I felt,” said the officer, “like creeping through a knot-hole.”

Why it is that persons will violate all the rules of politeness, make themselves disgusting to all the better part of society, sacrifice all self-respect, and contract a load of guilt for which they must answer to God, and all without the least possible hope of benefit, I cannot conceive.

There is one topic on which it seems to me that some advice may be beneficial to you, and the more so as it is seldom referred to with seriousness and candor. But it is one of so much delicacy that I fear to approach it, lest it should be turned into humor or ridicule. But I wish to throw over it an air of seriousness and candor which shall make it acceptable and profitable to you. The subject to which I refer is that of your intercourse with females. Females are generally amiable, virtuous, and worthy, and your esteem for them should be great. It is a bad omen for a young man to manifest a disrespect for the female character. But while they are generally virtuous and worthy, there are, to the mortification and chagrin of most of their sex, unhappy exceptions. Now, as you value your reputation, health,

and life, keep totally aloof from these. I cannot say all that I would wish to on this subject; but let me refer you to what is much better than anything which I could say, the warning voice of inspiration. Turn in particular to the seventh chapter of Proverbs, read it attentively, and never forget its solemn admonitions. But an honorable and pure intercourse with intelligent and virtuous females will have a refining, elevating, and happy influence on your life and character, by inspiring you to pursue such a course as shall make you worthy of their confidence and esteem. Be very punctilious in the observance of the strictest rules of honor in all this intercourse, and do not keep them in suspense in relation to your object. If you intend that your intercourse with a young lady shall be nothing more than polite attention, be sure that she so understands it. But if you wish that it shall ultimate in matrimony, frankly avow it. Young ladies are often left in a painful suspense for want of frankness on the part of apparent suitors.

In relation to matrimony, let your purpose be fixed to enter upon that whenever circumstances shall make it convenient and proper. But as this is a matter of much interest, avail yourself of the counsel

and advice of your most discreet friends. Intelligence, amiableness, and deep, cheerful piety are very important qualities in an intimate companion for life. And, if I may be permitted to anticipate a little, I will say that when you have made the transition, and find yourself in the new and happy state of a husband, recollect that your wife has left parents and friends, and all for your sake; she has thrown her all in this life at one stake, and unkindness from you would make her wretched indeed. You are therefore under a sacred obligation to treat her affectionately and kindly.

There is one more subject to which I wish to call your attention before I close this address and take my final leave of you, and that is one of infinite moment, in comparison with which everything else sinks into insignificance. I refer of course to the momentous interest of *immortality*. How immeasurably important is everything which pertains to an eternal state of existence! If you would make an estimate of the number of minutes which you may live on earth, and then to each minute apply a million of ages, it is only the vestibule, just the beginning of that future state of existence which

shall never, never close! And are we not insane to remain indifferent and unconcerned whether we are prepared or not for such a state? Do not say that this gives a gloomy view of your existence, but consider what God has done and continues to do for your present and eternal benefit. He has sent his only and beloved Son to die, that you may live; he has sent his Holy Spirit to lead you in the way of truth and righteousness; he has sent his Gospel to instruct you in the way of salvation; he sends his ministers of grace to pray you in his stead to be reconciled to him; he even stoops to ask, by them, your love; and nothing but the most willful obstinacy and resistance of his grace can prevent you from obtaining a state of joy and peace here, as kings and priests¹ to God, and of ultimate delight and glory around the throne of God, where the tall archangel might envy your condition.

Do you ask how can all this be obtained? I answer, there is no difficulty in it, no hard effort to be made, no deep mystery to be solved; nothing to be done but what a child of six or eight years of age can do. Indeed, it will give you much less labor, effort, and suffering to go to heaven than to go to perdition. First, then, become decided in your own

minds, at all events, to seek salvation, and in deep earnest beseech God to have mercy upon you, remembering that "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved;" and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that he has atoned for all your sins, and that through this atonement you may have eternal life as the free gift of God. If it still seems to you that there would be any difficulty in this, just commence in deep earnest, resolved never to relinquish your purpose to obtain salvation, and the difficulties will soon vanish. May God give you abundant grace and success, and may we finally meet joyfully on the other side of Jordan, and join in the praises of God and the Lamb!

CHAPTER XVII.

Conversations with Errorists—Atheists—Deists—Universalists—Debate
—Unitarians—Necessitarians.

A SHORT and easy method with error, being the substance of conversations which I have had with various persons at different times.

First, then, with the atheist. Say to him: "Now, sir, you profess to be governed by reason; let me, then, ask you: Does not everything, animate and inanimate, indicate design? Does not the structure of the eye, for instance, exhibit the strongest marks of design? the rolling ball, the delicate, transparent pupil and beautiful orb, formed like a convex lens to convey the rays of light to a focus, as they strike the retina, directly back of the pupil, and where the optic nerve receives its impression and conveys it to the brain, that strange emporium of sensation—could all this contrivance have been the result of fortuitous and incoherent chance? If we would examine the ear, and mark the way in which the impression from

the palpitating air is brought upon the fine membrane, or drum, behind which, and pressing against it, is the end of a lever, fixed upon a pivot, and the other end resting against the auditory nerve, which conveys to the brain the sense of hearing. Is there not here unmistakable evidence of design? You may, perhaps, have had an account of the course taken by Sir Isaac Newton with a distinguished and somewhat literary atheist, who advanced his skeptical sentiments to Sir Isaac, but who, at the time, did not seem to take notice of them, but requested the atheist to make him a visit; at the time agreed upon, Sir Isaac placed a new terrestrial and celestial globe, of great beauty, in the hall through which he conducted the atheist, whose attention was arrested by the elegance of the globes, and he said to Sir Isaac:

“Where did you get these globes?”

“I didn’t get them anywhere.”

“Well, who made them?”

“Nobody.”

“Who brought them here?”

“Nobody.”

“Why, do you mean to insult me?”

“No, sir, I do not mean to insult you; I only mean to convince you. You seriously tell me that the

heavens and the earth, of which these globes are but an imperfect representation, have been brought into existence, and placed in their present state of harmony and order, without any creating hand, or any directing intelligence. And yet, if I represent to you that these globes came into existence, and were placed here in such a way, you complain that I insult your understanding.”

The atheist blushed, and consented to the force of the argument. Had you been there, could your modesty have done less? If this does not convert an atheist it will at least silence him.

To a deist I have said, “You, of course, believe there is a God, and that he is wise and good;” to which he readily assents. “Considering the dark and benighted state of man, the stupid atheism or gross idolatry into which he is prone to fall, and, indeed, without a revelation, will infallibly fall, does it not seem probable that the goodness of God would incline him to make a revelation to man for his guidance in the devious path of life? Did not the wisest of ancient philosophers believe that God would make such a revelation? And if he has done so, is it not evident that it must be the Bible? And now consider well that the writers of the Bible must either have been

good or bad men ; and it is impossible to conceive that a set of bad men should have written, published, and propagated incomparably the purest and most sublime system of religion and ethics that the world ever saw ; and that they should have endured persecution, poverty, imprisonment, and death in its most painful and frightful forms, for the sake of propagating the most pure and holy religion, which denounced all falsehood and fraud, and threatened eternal vengeance upon all who were guilty of it. It cannot, therefore, be possible that the various books which constitute the Bible could have been written by bad men ; and good men would not, of course, have been guilty of palming an imposition and falsehood on the world. It therefore follows that the Bible must be what it claims to be, a revelation from God. Besides all this, if you could rob us of the exuberant consolations of Christianity, the conscious possession of divine favor and grace here, and the joyful hope of immortality and glory hereafter, what have you to present to us in exchange for all of this ?” Here the infidel always becomes mute, and I say to him : “ Do not feel embarrassed ; I did not ask the question because I supposed that you could answer it, for I knew that you could not ; at least, in any way that would not

cause you to blush. I was sure that you could not have become so assimilated to the beasts as to offer, as a substitute for the prospect of dying in the sight of heaven and the crown of eternal life within our reach, that we might die as ingloriously as the ass or the swine, with no hope beyond the gloomy confines of the grave. And here let me refer you to the painful dilemma of Hume, by which you may see that you are not alone in your inextricably awkward condition. Hume, the celebrated deist of England, had succeeded, by his subtle sophistry, in poisoning the mind of his mother, who had formerly been religious, with his gloomy infidelity. After this she was taken sick, and it became evident that she must die. She sent in haste for her son, and when he came she said to him: ‘My son, I was once happy in the enjoyment of religion and the hope of immortality through the Saviour’s grace; but I was influenced by your subtleties to relinquish that joyful hope, and I am now about to die without hope and without consolation, and I have sent for you to come and tell me what hope or what comfort you have to offer me for the sweet hope I once had in Christ?’ It is, perhaps, unnecessary to say that he was speechless.

On the subject of Universalism I shall not say

much here, as I have spoken at some length on it in the synopsis of the debate which I had with a Universalist preacher. I wish, however, to give an exhibit of a short and easy way with the Universalist; at least, what I have found to be so in informal discussions with them. I say thus: "Now, sir, let us make up our minds to be candid on this subject, as neither of us can have any interest to sustain anything but the truth, as that will stand, anything in our opinions to the contrary notwithstanding. In adopting the sentiment of universal salvation, you are aware, of course, that you do it in opposition to the almost uniform sentiment of mankind; that all nations and ages who have believed in a future state of existence, have believed that it would be a state of punishments or rewards, as the demands of truth and justice should require. This has also been nearly the uniform sentiment of the Jewish and Christian Churches; and beyond all doubt, the most plain, easy, and natural construction of the general sentiments of the Bible is, that it clearly contains the doctrine of future rewards of the righteous and punishment of the wicked. And now, sir, let me ask you, in the spirit of kindness and candor, are you certain that you are right in your sentiment of Universalism?" The answer to this

question, from all persons of any candor, must always be that they are not certain on that point. "Well, then, are you not hazarding too much by relying for salvation on your belief in a doctrine which, according to your own concession, may be false? Is there not too great an interest to be staked on any uncertainty? If you would in deep earnestness seek salvation, and, by repentance toward God and practical faith in Christ, make your calling and election sure, then no such danger would attend you; but it is no want of charity to say that, for the most part, all the hope of a Universalist for salvation is based on the correctness of his peculiar opinions, because but very few of them profess experimental piety, or a hope of salvation on any other ground than that the doctrine of Universalism is true; and that, too, in opposition to the almost uniform opinion of all nations and ages, and the most plain and obvious sense of the Holy Scriptures. Now, sir, suppose that you had an estate of ten thousand dollars, and that you wished to invest it in a farm, and that you found a farm of that price which suited you well, and by one course you could obtain a doubtful and uncertain title to the farm, and by another course you could obtain a title perfectly unquestionable and certain. Now, would

you not, without hesitating, prefer the latter course? Consider then, that even yourself being judge, your only correct course is deeply to repent of your sins, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, live soberly, righteously, and godly, be faithful unto death; then, and then only, can you be certain that you will obtain the crown of life."

With Unitarians my method has been short, and if it has not convinced, it has at least silenced them. To a Unitarian I say: "Will you please to tell me whether you worship Jesus Christ?" I have never yet found one who would make a direct, open, and frank answer to this question. I then say to them: "You are of course aware of your dilemma. All the angels of heaven fall down and worship him; the Christians of all ages have worshiped him; you cannot therefore make up your mind to say that you do not worship him. And, on the other hand, you dare not say that you do worship him, because you must then admit his divinity, or that you are an idolater." I have never yet found one who would undertake to extricate himself from this dilemma. It was this that made Socinius, the early leader of this heresy, say in a letter to a friend: "I know not what to do with my untoward followers. I tell them that they must

worship Christ; that all the angels of God worship him; but they reply that they will not worship anything short of the very and eternal God." Well, this was really a hard case. Again, to a Unitarian, I say: "Does the Bible contain any names or titles in relation to any supreme being which necessarily imply an infinite, eternal, and unoriginated being?" A reflecting one will reply: "If I say it does, you will aver that they are all applied to Christ." Of course I shall. You well know that the names or titles of God, Jehovah, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, etc., are applied to Christ, and to him is ascribed the work of creation. Then I will say "there are no names or titles in the Bible which necessarily imply an infinite and eternal God." Very well, then; the Bible does not teach the existence of any such being, and therefore the Bible is nothing more than a polished system of atheism. And this is the ultimatum of your rational Christianity, of which you have made so great a boast.

I have long been satisfied that the ultimatum in the struggle between truth and error may be arrived at by a much shorter cut than is generally adopted. With the most conciliatory feeling, I say to a necessitarian: "Sir, do you believe that God from eter-

nity has foreordained all things whatsoever come to pass?" "I do so believe." "Do you believe that God's decree is in accordance with his will?" "Yes." "You believe, then, that all sin is committed in exact accordance with God's will?" I have never been able to obtain a prompt answer to this question. They discover that they cannot give a direct answer to this question without being pushed directly into Universalism, inasmuch as the Saviour has said that he who does the will of his Father, the same is his mother, and brother, and sister. Again, I say to a necessitarian: "Do not be startled at my question; I ask it for the purpose of eliciting the truth, and wish you with the same view to answer it. Suppose that the devil had power to make a race of beings just according to his own will; could he be worse employed than to make a race of reprobates? that is, a race of sensitive, rational, and immortal beings, under an absolute necessity of being everlastingly wicked and, to the utmost extreme, miserable?"

I wish here to make a few remarks on the subject of Divine prescience, or foreknowledge of God. There is no other way in which metaphysical necessitarians exert themselves so much to perplex and puzzle those who are not in the habit of close thinking, as on the

subject of foreknowledge; but this perplexity is all for the want of correct views upon the subject. The principal difficulty here is the blending of logical with natural necessity. For instance: I am now sitting; there is therefore a logical necessity that I cannot be standing, as I cannot be sitting and standing at the same time. But there is no natural necessity that I might not be standing. To say that I am sitting, and therefore not standing, is good logic; but to say that I am sitting, and therefore I could not be standing, would be very bad logic. A little attention to this subject will easily cut the gordian knot which the necessitarians have tied with so much adroitness, as to make it to the unwary like a puzzling chain. The easiest method of managing, on this subject, those who are more fond of intricate metaphysics than the simple truths of the Gospel, is this: When one of these metaphysicians has commenced on me, with a mingled air of archness and triumph I have said to him: "Please to answer me one question, and I am ready to go with you to any length in the discussion of this subject." He will archly say, "Very well, what is the question?" This will usually be asked in a tone of victory, which leaves no doubt that full confidence is felt that the pending question can be

easily disposed of. But now for it: "Is God's foreknowledge of our acts the cause of those acts?" Here I subjoin: "I care not which way you answer this question." He looks down thoughtfully; the air of triumph gives way to one of perplexity and chagrin. I have never yet had the pleasure of obtaining a direct answer to this question; and after leaving the disappointed metaphysician to his perplexity for a while, I say to him: "Now, sir, if you say that God's knowledge of our acts is not the cause of them; you of course give up your whole theory, as no necessity of the acts can be adduced from the foreknowledge." Again, if you say that God's foreknowledge of our acts is the cause of them, then, as a holy cause cannot produce an unholy effect, as a pure fountain cannot send forth bitter waters, and a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, our acts, being all the effect and fruit of a holy cause, cannot of course be sinful. There is then, on such an hypothesis, no sin; then no sin no Saviour, and consequently no Christian religion; therefore, deism is true. By taking this course with those who think themselves so wondrous wise, they will never trouble us again.

I recollect many years ago to have seen a fugitive

piece of poetry, which, on account of the correctness of its sentiment, is worth being preserved :

“ If all things succeed
Just as they're decreed,
And immutable impulses rule us,
Then to preach and to pray
Is time thrown away,
And our teachers do naught but befool us.

“ And if by hard fate
We're drove this way or that,
As the carman with whip drives his horses,
Then no one can stray,
But must go the right way,
As the stars that are bound in their courses.

“ But if by free-will
We may go or stand still,
As best suits the present occasion,
Then mourn the mistake
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THE END.

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